AROVND THE FIRE

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AROUND THE FIRE

AROUND THE FIRE

Stories of Beginnings

HANFORD M. BURR
Author of "Donald McRea"

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM OLD WOOD-CUTS

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FOREWORD

WHEN the night is black about the campfire, and the flames die down, and the half-burned embers fall into the ashes, we look into the red chamber of romance and see the flickering shapes of the men of long ago. The silence deepens and the world of today is swallowed up by that of a yesterday older than history. The blood of Angle, Saxon and Jute, Kelt and Slav, sings in our brains. Something touches our eyes with a magic wand and we see at the heart of the fire pictures of the world when man was young. The backlog becomes a ruddy screen upon which pass and repass the heroes who won a world for us by their courage and skill.

These tales go with the moving pictures of the backlog. There are more where these came from, and the lover of the open fire can read them for himself.

The world of these pictures was young. Everything had to be learned—everything had to be won. But there were giants in those days and the Revealer held the guiding torch. Slowly but surely they won mastery over harsh nature, savage beasts, and even more savage men, but greatest of all, mastery over self.

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And they were men and women of our own race. Their blood runs in our veins. Their home was in Angeln, old England, the low-lying land where they lingered for awhile before they crossed the Great Water to build an empire on which the sun never sets. Some of their names were passed down from father to son and mother to daughter till they appeared in the Doomsday Book of King William, where they can be seen now by those who are curious.

Many of the animals who shared the forest primeval with man in Old England have long since disappeared, but they have left their bones in caves and peat bogs.

"How Men Found the Great Spirit" has been told about many camp-fires. There has been a call for more stories of the same kind. Here they are, and the writer hopes that others who "see things at night" in the fire will enjoy them, and see more for themselves.

H. M. BURR.

"THE PINES"
SPRINGFIELD, MASS., Dec., 1911.

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THE FIRE SPIRIT

J. LAPLANTE

AROUND THE FIRE

I. THE FIRE SPIRIT

BEFORE the years were counted or the circuit of the seasons reckoned, man lived where it was always summer, and summer heat ruled the north land, now ruled by winter cold. As the scepter of the Frost King reached farther and farther south, men slowly and reluctantly retreated from the old homes. But some lingered through the fireless winters for the love of the familiar places and the beauty of the northern spring and summer.

Among those who lingered was Ang, the mighty hunter. His home was in a cave at the edge of the great forest. It faced the south so that it could catch all the scant rays of the winter's sun. The mouth of the cave was partly closed by a screen of fir boughs, while a bark slab, torn from a big tree, formed a rude door. Inside the cave were bunks piled high with dry moss and leaves, with the skin of animals which Ang had slain thrown over them.

It was not yet midwinter, but it was cold, bitter cold. As Ang sat in front of his cave, chipping knife blades and arrow points from flint, he moved from time to time to keep in the feeble light of

the sun, but it seemed to have little warmth, and he shivered and grumbled to himself: "Every year the cold grows stronger. The old men tell of a time when it came late and went soon, but that must have been long ago. Ugh! but it is cold! It gets under my bearskin; it nips my ears and numbs my hands. I wish I had taken the long journey to the south land, but it was far for the woman and the child, and I hoped that the Ice Giant would grow old and lose his strength — and I was born here; my father and my father's father hunted in these woods and fished in this river, and men, like trees, take root."

The sun sank into a cold gray cloud in the west. The bite of the wind grew sharper. The hoarse cough of a child echoed from the cave behind him, and the dull crooning song of the mother, as she tried to warm the sick child at her breast, could be heard as the wind was lulled for a moment.

Colder and more cold it grew, but Ang would not enter the cave. He could not bear to hear the troubled breathing of the child or see the face of the mother. He dreaded the coming of the grim White Spirit for this, his last child. Sometimes he fancied he could hear him rushing through the woods above the cliff, and feel the chill of his breath on his face. Had he no other food but children, this dread hunter?

Colder and more cold it grew, but Ang still lingered. He piled dry moss about his feet and tried

to bring warmth to his numb hands by hammering off flakes of flint which he would later shape into rough weapons and tools. He struck two flints together in a kind of dumb fury. It was a glancing blow, and one of the flints dropped into the dry moss at his feet with a flicker of sparks. A coil of gray smoke crept out of the moss like a serpent coming out of his hole. A bright spot at its heart grew brighter and brighter, and then red flames lapped hungrily.

Ang leaped to his feet in astonishment. At the smiting of the flint the Fire Spirit had been born. Its breath was the breath of summer. He stretched out his hands over the flames, and the cold loosened its grip. He touched the flame, and it stung him like an angry bee. Clearly the Spirit must not be handled. Awe and wonder filled the mind of Ang. He fell on his knees and prayed to the Fire Spirit: "Spirit of light and heat, Thou hast come in our hour of need — I know not whence. Stay and keep away the terrible cold Spirit with thy red arrows. Stay! I will deny thee nothing. If Thou art hungry, I will feed thee."

As Ang watched the fire, it hungrily ate up the dry moss and lapped the dry sticks. He brought more and fed them to the reaching flames. The northern darkness had shut in the rest of the world, light lingered at the door of the cave of Ang, and the warm breath of the fire brought back the heat of summer in the midst of winter. Joy filled the heart of Ang, and he called to the mother and the

child: "Oma, Om, come! The Great One has heard. Come, come, come quickly."

The bark door opened, and the mother came out holding the child to her breast. A cry of wonder broke from her as she saw the fire, but wonder gave way to the mother instinct. The All-Father had heard. Here were warmth and light. The gray huntsman should not have her child. She crouched by the fire, holding the babe in her arms so that she sheltered it from the encircling cold while the glowing fire warmed and healed it. With gratitude and awe she watched the color come back to the child's face, and then she looked with eager questioning at the face of Ang, as it shone with a light brighter than that of the fire.

Finally he spoke: "I sat at the going in of the cave. Fear gripped me; the cold smote me. I said, Odin has forgotten. It may be that he has gone to the south land because the cold was stronger than he. I heard the barking of the child. The dread of the great robber was on me. I tried to forget. I smote the flints together. Star flies seemed to leap from the stone, and fire was born in the heart of the moss."

Then Ang stood by the mother and the child and placed his left hand on the head of the mother and raised his right hand to the sky to which the leaping flames pointed and said: "Great Father, now I know that none is greater than Thou; not even the giants of the north. Thy shining arrows have driven the huntsman back. And I know that

Thine eyes see farther than the eagle floating in the sky, for thou hast seen us alone in the great woods, and Thine ear is quicker to hear than that of the mother listening for the cry of her first born, for thou hast heard the cry that did not rise to our lips. Henceforth the fire shall be the sign of Thee. As the flames leap up to the sky, so shall our thoughts leap to Thee, Our Father."

All through the long cold winter Ang and Oma fed the fire, and Om grew well and strong again. They very soon found that the fire, though it gave so freely the life-giving light and heat, had to be treated with great care. It was a good servant but a poor master. One day little Om toddled too close and burned his hand on a live coal. On another day the wind blew the sparks from the fire into the dry rushes which screened the entrance to the cave, and in a moment the cave was filled with flames and smoke, and Oma had to cover her head and that of Om with skins and dash out into the open. All the bedding of dry leaves was burned up, and some of the skins were badly scorched. The wooden handles of many of Ang's spears and arrows and knives were burned also. It took many days of hard work to replace what the fire had eaten. So they came to fear as well as to love it.

But Ang and Oma learned one thing from the fire which burned out their cave that was worth more than a thousand fires could destroy. Part of a deer which Ang had killed hung inside of the cave. It had been very hard to get, and it was

almost the first thing which Ang thought of after the fire had burned down. If that had been destroyed, they might starve before he could kill another one. He dashed into the cave to see if anything was left, the fear of hunger already gripping his vitals. A strange new odor filled his nostrils and doubled his hunger — the smell of roasted venison. The deer still hung from the side of the cave. The hair had been burned off and the skin hung in rolls, but the flesh was there, brown, hot, dripping red.

At Ang's call Oma hurried in. It needed but one whiff of the fragrant air to convince her that the touch of fire had made of the cold frozen meat food more delicious than the fruits of summer. She snatched a long stone knife from her belt and cut strips of venison steak from the smoking mass and gave to Ang and Om.

After they had eaten, Ang looked into the glowing embers of the fire in front of the cave and pondered. The Fire Spirit had grown angry because they had taken only one of the gifts of the Great Father and had burned out the cave, but it had showed them what its magic touch would do to the frozen meat. The wonder of it grew on him. As he looked into the world at the heart of the coals, he saw the promise of a better one than that in which he lived — a world in which the sons of his son's sons should have discovered all the gifts of the Fire Spirit.

As Ang looked into the fire, Oma looked into

the face of Ang and wondered at what she saw there. His look seemed to pierce the blackness behind the fire a hundred days' journey. "Father of my son, what seest thou in the fire?" "I see," said Ang, "the spirits of the things which are to be. I see, but do not understand all that I see. I see our son's sons talking fire, the flames leaping from their mouths like tongues; I see them crossing the big Water in great logs which breathe out fire and smoke. I see — but there are no words to tell thee all that I see."

And Oma looked into the embers, and she too saw the flickering spirits of the things to be. She saw countless fires — fires in the woods, fires in caves, fires on altars — but those who tended the fires were the daughters of her daughters.

In a few days the damage done by the fire was repaired. It was Oma who discovered that water stopped the hunger of the fire, and when it grew too fierce she beat it back with boughs dipped in the stream which ran before their cave.

The warmth of the fire and the cooked meat made little Om grow as no boy had ever grown in the cold season, and before the winter was over he was running about as sturdily as a young bear. But it made trouble for Oma. The woods were full of savage wild beasts, bears, panthers, and wolves. Even Ang, with his strength and cunning and great stone axe and sharp knives, was in constant danger. When he went out to hunt, Oma always feared till he came back. What chance then

would little Om have? So she tried to keep him always in the clearing before the cave, but the task grew harder and harder as the weather grew warmer and Om's legs stronger and his eyes more curious.

One evening, just as the dark was shutting in, Oma was cracking some bones to get some choice marrow for Ang's supper after he returned from his hunting, and for a moment her back was turned to the boy. When she looked for him, he had slipped away into the darkness. The cry of a hyena broke on the stillness of the night, savage, blood-curdling. Then came a terrified scream from little Om. She leaped to her feet in terror. Where? Where? Which way? The sound seemed to come from all directions. Not knowing what she did, she snatched a burning brand from the fire and dashed into the darkness, leaving a trail of flame behind her.

She had gone only a few yards when she came upon the beast crouching over little Om. Thoughtless of all danger to herself, Oma leaped at the savage beast, whirling the burning brand about her head. The hyena gave a snarl of surprise and fear, dropped Om, and sprang away into the thicket, with leaps longer than any he had made in his life, for the fear of the fire was on him.

Oma snatched her baby to her breast and hurried back to the cave, crooning over him as she went. She brought him to the fire and stripped off his little fur coat; that was in shreds, but the child's skin was only slightly scratched.

As she locked him in her arms to comfort him, Ang suddenly leaped out of the darkness, his great stone axe swinging in his hands. Terror was in his face; sweat dropped from him like rain. "The hyena! I heard his cry here and that of little Om!"

Oma pointed to the baby in her arms, to the torn skin at her feet, to the smoldering branch and to the darkness which had swallowed the great beast. "It was only a moment, but he slipped away into the darkness; I heard the cry, the cry of the beast and the cry of the child. I caught up a brand from the fire and ran; the fearless one ran at the sight of it. The child is safe, see!" And Om smiled at his father through tear-dimmed eyes.

Then Ang knelt by the side of the child and its mother and prayed: "O Thou who art greater than the greatest and mightier than the mightiest, again Thou hast saved us by the red magic. By it Thou hast made us, Thy children, masters of the beasts of the wood, for the fear of the Red One is upon them all."

As the strength of the winter passed and the snow began to melt, Ang had a visit from Wang, who lived some days' journey to the east. During the winter the men of the north saw little of each other. Each family needed a large hunting ground, and men had not learned to live together. The distances between the families were so great that when the snow was deep in the woods months passed in which the isolated families saw no human beings

outside of their own circle. But when the ice broke up and the snow melted, the men who were on fairly friendly terms paid visits to each other and exchanged stories of the winter's experiences.

Now Wang approached the cave of Ang with great ceremony. It was neither good manners nor safe to approach another man's home too suddenly. One could not be sure of a welcome, and it was always assumed that one who came suddenly was an enemy. So Wang strolled out on an open spot by the bank of the river which flowed by the cave of Ang, and acted as if he did not know that there was another human being within a day's journey. He tossed stones into the water and watched the ripples, apparently absorbed in meditation. Then he imitated the call of the wild fowl which swarmed the river banks.

For a time Ang ignored him, going about as if he saw no one. But Oma and Om peered out curiously from the mouth of the cave. At last Ang wandered down to the river's edge and looked aimlessly everywhere but where Wang stood. He too tossed many stones into the river. Finally, apparently satisfied that all the demands of primitive etiquette had been met, Ang turned to Wang and put his left hand over his heart and raised his right to the sky. Wang did the same; they were of one blood and children of the Great Father. Both dropped their weapons where they stood and went to meet each other unarmed. Ang and Wang had played together as boys, hunted together as

young men and taken wives from the same family, but each spring, after the winter's separation, they met with the same elaborate ceremony, because it was the man custom.

When the men were seated, Oma and Om came out and sat near by. "A long winter," said Ang. "A long winter," answered Wang. "Much cold," said Ang. "Much cold," answered Wang. "The woman and the boy?" asked Wang. "The woman is well, and the child grows like a bear's cub," replied Ang.

Wang turned and looked at Oma and Om and gave a grunt of surprise. "Why, they are as fat and sleek as if it was the time of fruits and nuts instead of the end of the great cold, when even the bear is so thin that he casts no shadow. Has the eagle carried thee to the south land on its wings? Have you found food that cold does not harden? Has Odin fed you? My woman sits all day at the going in of the cave. She looks old like the moss-bearded oak. She notices nothing, but talks ever about the little one whom the Black Robber took; she cares not for the child that is left, who cries for food like a young kid whose mother the wolves have eaten. And my strength has not come again. My traps and snares take nothing, and my arrow is slower than the flying deer."

At this Oma leaped to her feet and brought a piece of dried venison from the cave and a cake made from a flour of pounded nuts and seeds and

put them before the hungry man. He ate ravenously, like a famished wolf, in silence, but questioning with eager eye, "How? Why? What?"

And Ang answered the unspoken question: "It was cold, so cold that the blood in one's body ran slow and became like ice in the stream. The meat became like stone. The supply of nuts failed. The woman grew weak. The huntsman from the north took the child by the throat. His breath came hard. I said, 'He will be taken as the others have been taken, and the mother will not stay without the child, and I shall be alone,' and I cried to the Great One, to Odin, the All-Father: 'We are cold, give us heat; we are hungry, give us food.' I heard no answer; there was no voice; but the prayer was heard. I sat by the going in of the cave, making knives of flint, not thinking to use them, but hoping to forget and cover up the hoarse crying of the child with the noise of the flints. So I smote two stones together, and the chips fell into the dry moss at my feet. There was a buzzing noise like that of a bee in a flower; a little white cloud rose from the moss, then spots of light like starflies at night. Red tongues reached out and ate up the moss and the dry sticks. I saw that the Red One was hungry, and I gave him more moss and dry wood to eat. He grew big and bright, and his breath was warm like that of summer, and Oma brought out the child, and he drove away the barking sickness from the child's throat. Then we knew that Odin had heard us and sent him to save us."

And Ang told Wang how they had learned to cook the venison; how they had learned to feed the Red One and keep him from wandering. He told how the fear of him was on all the beasts of the woods, so that not even the most savage and the most hungry dared stand before him; and the smallest child was safe within the circle of light.

Then they took the wondering Wang and showed him the sacred fire, gift of the Keeper of Secrets; they cooked venison over the coals so that he might taste it. And when Wang started for home Oma gave him a shoulder of smoked deer's meat and cakes made of acorn meal and cooked on flat stones.

And now a strange thing happened. Pity stirred the heart of Ang. Odin had helped him in the time of his troubles; why should he not help Wang? He turned to Oma. "The hunting is good; the stream is full of fish; the Red One can warm more than three. I will go and bring Wang and his woman and his child. They can live in the cave which we thought should be Om's. It is the will of the All-Father that men should live together."

And the men went together and brought Wang's wife and child, and they made a screen and a bark door for the new cave home. Oma taught Suta, wife of Wang, the mysteries of the fire, and Ang and Wang became the first neighbors, and that also was one of the gifts of the Revealer, through the Spirit of the Fire.

As time went on, the story of Ang, the fire-man,

spread through all the north country, and often men came as Wang had done, many days' journey, through trackless forest, to see the wonderful fire in front of the cave of Ang. But Ang told to no one but Wang the secret of how to call the Fire Spirit. To men who were friendly he gave live coals to carry away in bowls hollowed out of soapstone. Men who were the enemies of Ang did not dare come near his cave for fear of the red knives which guarded it.

By and by men began to say to each other, as they went to hunt or sat about the carefully tended fire, that Ang, the fire-man, must be loved by Odin, and they came to Ang and said: "Tell us of the Great One," and Ang was troubled because he had not heard his voice or seen him. As he hunted in the stillness of the forest, he pondered: "Why had no one ever seen the Great Spirit? Or was the sky his face and the sun and moon his eyes? Why had no one heard his voice? Or was the thunder his voice? If so, no one understood his language." The more he thought, the more troubled he became. For days at a time he rarely spoke and went about as one in a dream, and Oma said to Wang and to others who came, "The spell of Odin is on him," and they began to look on Ang with awe and wonder and something of fear.

One night as Ang was far from home and slept in a cave on a hill-side, he dreamed that his shadow self left his body and journeyed to a far country, and there he saw his father and his father's father

and the men of long ago. They all sat about a great fire and beckoned to him to join their circle. Not a word was spoken. There was a silence like that before the storm breaks, and each one in the mystic circle looked steadfastly into the fire, which burned on and on, though no one fed its flames.

As Ang continued to look into the flames, it seemed as if something was lifted from his eyes and he saw what no one had seen before. The earth was the body of Odin. His life was the life of all. He had not one voice like man, but many. He spoke in the thunder, in the voice of the storm, but also in the song of the birds and in the words of one's best beloved.

Ang awoke just as the sun was driving the mists from the valley beneath him, and these words came to his lips as if they were a message from the dream world which he had just left: "The wise son of the All-Father sees him everywhere and hears his voice always." For the first time in his life Ang saw the beauty of the world at his feet, and the song of the birds which filled the vibrant air awoke a new joy of melody and harmony in his soul.

As Oma and Om came out to meet him, he looked at them with newly opened eyes. How beautiful was the ruddy brown sheen of Oma's hair and the light in her eyes as she welcomed him! And little Om's eyes sparkled like dewdrops in the light of early morning, and his laughter was like the splashing of a brook over its pebbles!

When Ang told Oma of his dream, she answered:

"The men were right. The spell of the Keeper of Secrets was on thee. Thou art a man apart. Henceforth thou shalt tell men the will of the one who hides himself."

And so Ang became one of the voices of Odin. From far and near men in trouble and men in doubt came to him, and he spoke words of comfort and wisdom. And every year before the cold kept men apart they gathered at the home of Ang. They built a great stone altar, and each man threw a log upon the fire which Ang had kindled. And they brought the choicest from their hunting and had a great feast, but they always gave the best to Ang, and he put it in the fire, saying, "The best we have is Thine and we are Thine." And when they had feasted and were satisfied, Ang talked to them of the All-Father, and each year his words were wiser and more winning.

Before the men departed each took a brand from the fire and marched about the altar chanting:

Spirit red, Spirit red,
Thine hunger has been fed.

Spirit hot, Spirit hot,
Forget us not, forget us not

As the year grows old
Keep us from the cold!

In the darkness of the night
Be our shining light,
Spirit white, Spirit white!

THE FIRST POTTER

II. THE FIRST POTTER

ANG was a mighty hunter and also a priest of Odin, but Oma was a famous housewife or cave-wife, and not only Suta, the wife of Wang, came to take lessons of her, but many other women who had heard of her wonderful skill in cooking old food in new ways and discovering new foods which the magic of the fire made palatable. She had learned not merely how to cook the meat which Ang brought, but to dry it so that it would keep for a long time. She discovered how to make a coarse flour from nuts and acorns and to bake cakes on flat stones. At the fire feast the cooking of Oma made as great an impression as the wisdom and strength of Ang.

But her greatest discovery was the art of making pottery dishes out of clay and baking them before the fire. For a long time women had made baskets of reeds and willow twigs in which they could carry dry foods, but the problem was to get something in which they could carry liquids. Sometimes they used skin bottles, but they soon leaked and the water rotted them out. Then some clever woman smeared the inside of a closely woven basket with resinous pitch. Another lined her baskets with clay

and baked them in the sun, but water would soon soften the clay. Then came Oma and the fire and the art of baking clay. This is the way it happened. Oma had been lining some baskets with clay, and little Om tried to imitate her. Since it was cold he sat as near to the fire as he could, and after he had finished one he would put it on a stone near the fire until he had a row of them. Then the wind changed suddenly and blew the fire towards him, and he had to move quickly, leaving his clay baskets on the rock. He called to his mother to get them, but she had no notion of getting burned for so small a cause and she was too busy to bother, as mothers often are.

That night after Om had gone to sleep she sat by the fire with Ang, and her eyes spied the little row of clay baskets. She picked one up to show the father what a clever boy his son was getting to be. As she touched the clay, she found it dry and hard as no clay she had ever touched before. Some of the baskets were dry and crumbly, but two or three in the center were hard as stone. A thought came to her. She ran to the brook and filled the hardest with water and brought them back to the fire. They did not soften or leak. Then she put them on a flat stone and pushed them almost into the fire. Soon the water in them began to bubble and steam.

"Look!" cried Oma. "At the touch of the Red One a little Cloud Spirit goes up to the great Cloud Spirits that fly in the blue above us." Then

Ang knew that Odin had given a new gift. "This time the Red One has spoken to you; what has he said?"

Oma carefully drew the little clay pots from the fire, and after they had cooled she examined them. Two of them were cracked, but one was firm and solid as if it had been cut from stone. She held it up before Ang in triumph. "This is what we have been waiting for since the beginning of time. The Red One has worked magic on the clay, and its old enemy, the water, cannot eat through it."

The next day Oma made baskets lined with clay and then, putting them on flat stones, pushed them into the heat of the fire. Some of them crumbled, but others baked hard and firm. As the heat burned off the inclosing basket, the pattern was left molded on the clay.

After many experiments Oma learned just what clay to use and how to bake it. And she made pots of all sizes and arranged them on ledges of her cave and filled them with nuts and seeds. Then she learned how to use the clay pots for cooking. In the old days she placed scraps of meat and bone and roots in a pitch-lined basket and then added water and hot stones from the fire. Of course the pitch softened and gave an unpleasant taste to the stew, and often the hot water softened it so much that the basket became like a sieve. But now Oma could mix her stews and brews and boil them until they were soft and delicious and the clay dish was just as good as before.

And Suta and other women came to look; and they wondered and tasted, and smacked their lips, and asked how it was done, then went home to do likewise. And the fame of Ang and Oma grew in the north land, and men said, "They are loved by the Great One."

But if Oma made the first pottery and the most useful, Suta, wife of Wang, made the most beautiful. After she had learned to bake the clay so that neither fire nor water would touch it, she amused herself by making dishes of queer shapes. Then she discovered it was not necessary to make the basket molds, and that if she made marks on the clay they would be baked in. She began by making a little row of nail prints about the rim — ((((((((((. Then she made rough pictures of animals and men with a sharpened stick. And the fame of Suta went out also through the north land, and they came from far away to see the wonderful things which she had done. Others tried, but no one could make such beautiful dishes as Suta.

Before the great fire feast an idea came to Suta like a dream in the night, she knew not from where. She would make a great bowl for Odin and she would mold on it pictures of his gifts, so that all who saw would remember from whom the good things came. With great care she shaped a bowl as high as a five-year-old child and so large that a grown man could not circle it with his arms. On it she pictured the man who shot the first deer with a stone-tipped arrow, the man who made the first

snare for the wild birds, the man who first crossed the deep water in a hollowed log, Ang striking fire from the flints, Oma baking the clay dishes. Then she hesitated. These and many things more the Great One had given; what would He give next? What did she want most?

Now Suta was not like Ang or Wang or even like Oma. Wang had thought sometimes that she was not so good a cook as Oma and that she spent too much time listening to the song of the birds and watching the play of the light on the water and the woods and the far-off hills. She did these things sometimes when he thought she ought to get wood for the fire or cook something for him, and he grumbled a little. But now that she made dishes of clay which no one else could make and all men said, "What a fortunate man Wang is to have a woman that can make such things!" Wang began to be very proud of her. He even went so far as to get wood for the fire, which he did not think man's work.

And what did Suta the dreamer want? She did not want more food or more clothes or a bigger cave; she wanted the power to mold in clay the things she saw and loved and the things which she saw with her eyes closed. So she put on the great bowl for the All-Father a picture of a woman, with her back turned on the lookers and a sharpened stick in her hand, just ready to work the soft clay, but waiting for the power to draw on clay the picture in her mind. It was the first expression

of the unsatisfied yearning of the artist for beauty and the power to express it. For Suta was the mother of those who love the beautiful and long to give it permanent form.

When the bowl for the Giver was finished, it was placed on a stone foundation in front of the stone altar, which Ang and Wang had made. At the feast it was filled with sparkling water from a spring near by, and as the men danced about the fire they dipped their hands in it as they passed by and sprinkled the water on the fire and on themselves and sang:

Singing water of the brook,
  Shining laughter of the wood,
Talking picture of the clay,
  Earth and fire and water, all
Are voices of the Great.

All who saw the great bowl which Suta had made were filled with wonder, and they wanted her to make something for them. Then the great idea came to Wang. Now Wang was not so strong as Ang or so good a hunter, but he wanted just as much to eat and just as warm furs to wear. He liked better to sit talking with some crony, in the shade in summer or by the fire in winter. Talking and sitting were the two things of which he never tired. Now when the world was young such men went hungry and cold, and Wang had done so often, and, more 's the pity, Suta and little Sut; but then came the idea. Every one wanted Suta's clay dishes; he wanted deer's meat and bear's,

and furs, and the choicest seeds and nuts. He would barter the things which Suta made for the things he wanted. Suta would do the work; others would bring food and furs and fruits; he would sit in front of the cave and give as little of the first for as much of the second as possible. And the idea worked. Suta loved to mold the plastic clay and decorate it. Many wanted the things which she had made, and Wang's wily tongue multiplied the number of those who were willing to pay for what they wanted.

So Wang became the father of a long line of traders, and the Wang family had more food than they could eat and more furs than they could wear, and Wang grew thick in the belly and thin in the calf, but it suited him, and Suta was too busy with her clay to care. At least she said nothing. And Wang the trader became almost as great a man as Ang the priest.

And Oma, wife of Ang, grew envious of Suta, wife of Wang. And she grumbled to Ang: "Did not you find the Red One and bring Wang and Suta so that they should not perish from the cold? Have you not fed them with meat of your own hunting? Did not I learn from the Red One how to harden and mold the clay? Did I not show Suta? Do I not work harder than she? Am I not a better cook? Can I not make better coats of fur? But see, little Sut has finer furs than Om and is fatter. And all who come now pass by our cave, except at the great feasts, or when they are

sick and in trouble, and go to talk with Wang and look at Suta. Is she so much better to look at than Oma?"

But Ang comforted her with wisdom that had come from long broodings under the shadow of the Keeper of Secrets. "The Giver has differing gifts. To the fire he gives one, to the water another, to the earth another. To Suta he gave the love of beauty; to you he gave the love of doing and making; and the joy of doing is greater than the joy of having. To each her gifts as the Great One wills. And I would rather be the man of Oma than of Suta." So Oma was comforted, though she often sighed wistfully as she saw men and women go by to the cave of Wang or watched Suta deftly mold some new thought into the yielding clay.

THE FIRST GANG

III. THE FIRST GANG

THE years went by, and Om and Sut were almost men. They had trapped the smaller animals, now and then shooting a deer with their arrows or driving one into a pitfall. But now they aspired to bigger game. They wanted to sit with the men about the campfire, to be treated by the women, and especially by the girls of their own age, as if they were grown up. And there was just one way to demonstrate to the satisfaction of all that they had arrived at man's estate, and that was to prove themselves hunters strong enough and cunning enough to match their wits and weapons against the strength and fury of the bear and the wild buffalo.

They spent long days in the woods together planning and contriving. They provided themselves with bows of the strongest and arrows of the sharpest, with saw-edged knives, lances, and stone axes. For hours they shot at a mark, taking turns and criticizing each other's shooting and handling of the bow. Sometimes the men found them and smiled at them indulgently. But the women and girls laughed and jibed at the boys and pretended to be very much alarmed at the idea of two smooth-

faced boys going hunting alone in the woods. That made the boys work all the harder and keep more and more by themselves.

Now in a valley, some distance away, there was a herd of wild buffalo, the most dreaded of all the wild beasts. The bear was ugly only when hungry or wounded. The leopards rarely attacked men in the daylight and in the open. Even the wolves did not like to fight men unless they could take them at a disadvantage. But the buffalo bulls seemed to have in their breasts the concentrated fury of all the savage creatures of the wild. They feared nothing. Their thick hide and powerful muscles defended their vital parts from the arrows and spears of men. They would charge at sight, and when their keen eyes did not detect their enemies their sensitive nostrils did. The only possibility of escape was to climb the nearest tree, and sometimes the mad bull would lie in wait at the foot of the tree till the man dropped from cold or exhaustion. Many men had been already killed. Even the boldest and the hardiest rarely ventured near the buffalo valley. The boys were warned from it as from sure death.

For that reason, perhaps, it had a peculiar fascination for Om and Sut. They talked about it and dreamed about it. They climbed hills from which they could look down into it. They never forgot the time when they first saw the herd in the distance, the bulls feeding on the outside, the cows and calves on the inside. Now and then some young

bull would get too bold and rouse the anger of one of the kings of the herd and there would be a terrible battle. When the dust hid the fighters from the boys' sight, they could hear the terrible bellowings.

As time went on, buffalo valley had a greater and greater attraction for the boys. They ventured nearer and nearer. They lay on the bluffs overlooking the valley and boasted to each other how they would kill a bullock and carry it back to their cave homes; and they imagined how envious the men and boys who had been afraid would be and how humble the girls.

But one day they ventured a little too near, and a stray bullock caught sight of the boys and immediately charged. Each boy climbed a tree with a swiftness which did credit to his bringing up, and there they stayed hour after hour during the long day, the bull watching them from blood-red eyes. Now and then he would stroll away to browse and drink, but at the slightest movement would dash back to the foot of the trees where the boys roosted. As night came on, the boys grew colder and colder and hungrier and hungrier. They remembered the men who had gone into the buffalo valley and never come back, and they wished they were at home, even though the girls did laugh at them and they had to sit back of the men at the fire.

Finally they escaped, but by good fortune, not by any prowess of their own. A great bear came out of the wood, looking for something to fill his

empty stomach. He had missed a deer as it came to drink. He was tired of roots and ants' nests. He wanted meat — good red meat and plenty of it. When he saw the bullock, he hesitated for a moment, for big as he was he usually passed bulls by. A fight with one was such uncertain business, and even if he killed the bull the appetite was likely to be killed too. But the bear was very big and the bullock not very large and he was out of sorts and he hesitated too long. The bull spied him and charged instantly. The bear stood on his hind feet like a great boxer. As the bull struck him, he gave him a blow with his great paw which would have broken the neck of any other animal and buried his great fangs in his shoulder. But the bull's sharp horns pierced the chest of the bear and bore him back to the ground. Deeper and deeper the cruel horns reached, while the claws of the bear tore great strips from the bull's flanks. It was a terrible spectacle, but the boys were too near to enjoy it. Quick as a flash they slid down and ran up the cliffs above them like two monkeys. At the top they stopped, panting for breath, and looked down into the valley. The air was filled with terrible roarings and bellowings. In the dim light they could see a huge brown mass rolling back and forth below them. Now they thought the bear had won and now the bull.

By and by the dark settled down, and nothing could be seen; the sounds grew fainter and finally all was still. The boys did not dare to go through

the woods in the dark, so they found a bed of leaves and lay down where they were. But there was not much sleeping that night. A leopard's shrill cry woke them from their first doze; the baying of wolves from the next; and when a great owl gave his weird wail just above their heads, they gave it up.

The crackling of twigs told them that they were being hunted by some night prowler. In the dark and with no weapons — for they had dropped everything but their knives — they were at the mercy of any wild beast which discovered their hiding place. Then Om remembered the fire which had saved his life when a child, the fire which no animal was bold enough to come near. Could he make a fire? The moss upon which they lay was dry. A rough flake of flint which had not been shaped was in his skin pouch and his flint knife was in his belt. He had seen his father call the Red Spirit from the moss by striking flints together. Once or twice he had succeeded in doing it himself, but it was no easy task. Still, there was nothing for it but to try. With trembling hands he gathered the driest of the moss into a little pile and pulled together some dry twigs. Sut got on his knees ready to blow the smallest spark into flame. Om took the flint flake in his left hand and struck it a glancing blow with his knife. A dull spark flew, but did not light the moss. Again and again he tried, but in vain. Meanwhile soft but ominously heavy footfalls came nearer and nearer. It was now or never.

In desperation he struck a terrific blow which shattered the knife in his hand and brought the blood to his battered hand. He saw nothing, but Sut suddenly stooped lower and blew gently and then more strongly. A tiny glow appeared, a wisp of smoke, and then a red flame. Om crouched by the fire, exhausted, speechless, and helpless; but Sut skillfully fed the growing flames till they leaped high, and the hunter in the dark leaped away with great bounds into the deep woods.

All night the boys sat by the fire, hungry and exhausted, but happy and safe. In the morning they looked down on the open spot below them which had been the scene of the terrible fight of the night before; and there, still locked together by horn and claw and jaw, were the bear and the bull, both defeated or both victorious. A fox came out of the bush and sniffed at the pool of blood in which they lay; a flock of red-eyed buzzards hovered in the air above and finally lit on a dead tree near by.

The boys were looking with mingled awe and delight at the bodies of their savage foes of the day before, when a brilliant thought came to Sut. "Om! The horns and claws! We will take them to the camp, and who will laugh at us then!" No sooner thought than done. Down the cliff they clambered, forgetful of everything but the coveted trophies. At the foot they found their weapons where they had dropped them. The fox skulked away, the buzzards screamed and flapped to a little

more distant tree, while the boys hacked off with rude knife and stone bludgeon one of the bear's claws and the horns of the bull. Then they fled up the cliff again and started hot foot for home.

As they approached the stream by which they lived, Sut began to hasten, but Om went slower and slower. "Hurry, you snail," said Sut, "the women and girls will be pounding the meal and making ready for the men to eat and they will see by these that we are not boys to be laughed at." "But," said Om, "we did not kill them; we ran away." "Oh! but we don't need to tell all that," said Sut; "hurry up, hurry up!" But Om would not hurry. He went more and more slowly and finally sat down to think it out. The temptation was a very strong one. Perhaps all they would need to do would be to be silent, and it would be very pleasant to be treated like mighty hunters and men. But the trouble was that deep down in their hearts they would know that they had not proved it.

Then a thought came to Om which settled his uncertainty. If it had not been for Odin who sent the bear to fight the bull, and sent the Red One at the prayer of the flints to drive away the leopard, they would not be here and there would be no story to tell. Then he remembered that his father had said that the Great One loved truth as he loved light. He turned to Sut with all his indecision gone. "We will tell the truth! We will

not win the man-right by telling a lie." Sut grumbled a little, but yielded as he always did to the stronger will of Om.

When the boys came to the river bank, there was a great shout, and all went out to meet them, for the villagers had grown anxious at their long absence. And they were pleased that no one laughed at them, not even the girls. As the boys were being fed, they told the story of their adventures amid the eager questionings of the home group. The horns of the bull and the paws of the bear were passed about, and the older men told how large the bear must have been from the size of the paw. Then they told stories of bears which they had seen and fights of many kinds in the forest till Om and Sut were all but forgotten. But Om was pleased to notice that his father looked at him with quiet approval in his eyes, and he heard him say to Oma: "Our son will be a great hunter, for his feet are swift and his hands are strong, and his head is chief over them all, and more than that, he is beloved by the Great One." And Om was glad.

For a while the boys brooded over their adventure and kept away from the buffalo valley. But the horns and the great claws kept reminding them, and again all their hunting trips seemed to lead towards the dangerous valley. Oma had tried to make Om promise that he would not go there again, but Ang had said: "Do not make him promise. He must prove his man-right as we all have done, and the Great One loves him."

Finally Om said to Sut: "We cannot escape the call of the death valley. Something tells me that we will either leave our bones there or win our manright. I have been thinking it over, and it seems to me that one of the reasons why so many men have lost their lives there is that they have not used their brains and they have not worked together. Why should n't we be the first to do it? My idea is this. We will get together ten boys of our own age and we will have only those who will promise under the sacred oak tree to hunt together and not each for himself. Then we will choose one who shall be to the others as the head is to the hands and feet. All shall obey him. When we have learned to work together, we will go where the cliffs which overlook the buffalo valley draw together, and we will pile great stones where a push will send them crashing down. Then we will keep watch, and some time when the wind blows up the valley and the herd is well up to where the cliffs are too steep to climb, where they come together like two streams, we will pray to the Fire Spirit and take burning brands from the fire and light the tall dead grass at the opening of the valley. Six will start from one side and six from the other, and we must outrun the deer. The buffalo will run from the wall of fire farther and farther up into the narrow part of the valley, and when they are bunched together like fish in a trap we will hurl down great stones and shoot our arrows, and there will be meat enough for all the men of the

north country, and every cave shall have its buffalo skin at the going in."

So Om and Sut got the other boys together with great secrecy, and every one was made to take the oath of loyalty to the gang under the sacred oak. And Sut was chosen Chief, because he was the best talker. Om could make the plans and carry them out, but Sut could explain them to others so that they would understand and want to carry them out. In the working of the thing Sut did most of the talking, but he always kept his eye on Om and did what Om wanted, and when it came to doing things Om was leader.

For weeks the clan scouted the valley, often having hairbreadth escapes when they ventured too near. It seemed as if the wind would never be in the right direction when the herd was at the small end of the runway. But the delay was a good thing. The boys learned to hang together and obey the commands of their chief. One boy nearly lost his life by disobeying, but the lesson was learned, and the gang hung together as no boys had ever done since the man-story began.

At last the day came when the look-out reported the herd well up in the narrow end of the valley and the wind blowing up. Nothing was said, but by common consent Om was leader for the day. He sent Sut and five other boys to the south, while he and five more went to the north. Each gang was to build a fire where the smoke would not blow up the valley, and dry torch sticks were made ready

to light. At midday, when a spear driven into the ground cast no shadow, Om shot an arrow high into the air. Each boy seized a torch from the fire and dashed across the mouth of the valley, lighting the dry grass as he ran.

It was a wild rush. Never had the boys run as they ran that day. In the years after, they told the tale to their children and grandchildren and they set the pace faster with each telling. In less time than it takes to tell, the boys had spread their net of fire and the wind was drawing it for them.

When the boys reached the cliffs, the frightened herd was already crowding up into the narrow end of the wedge-shaped valley, fleeing in terror from the pursuing wall of fire. Then the boys rolled the great stones down upon the seething mass below them; shooting their arrows till the supply was exhausted. The maddened buffaloes trampled on and gored each other until scarcely more than half the herd escaped alive.

The young hunters, exhausted but triumphant, danced along the ledges, filling the air with savage yells.

The next thing was to send word to the scattered homes. Three boys were left to keep watch, and the rest ran as if running a race to carry the news of the feast that was waiting for all who would come.

Before night every man, woman, and child within a distance of twenty miles was on the spot. Old

suspicions were forgotten and old grudges ignored, for the time being, at least. A great fire was built, and the men stripped the hides from the dead buffaloes and the women rolled them up to carry away for tanning. One of the largest of the bulls was dragged to the fire and roasted whole. Far into the night they worked and feasted. Finally, as they stretched themselves about the fire, exhausted but satisfied, Ang spoke:

"I have seen the Cold Spirits come and go many times, but I have never seen so many men together as now. Men have not been like the wolves who hunt in packs or like the buffaloes which feed in droves or like the ducks and geese which come and go in flocks. Each man, with his mate, has lived apart like the bear or the lion. There have been fear and hatred between us because each man feared that some other man would spoil his hunt or rob his traps. And we have lived far apart. To-night we sit about the same fire as some of us have sat before at the feasts of the Great One. As I look into the fire, into the cave of the Red One within it, I see that whenever men come together to hunt, to feast, and there is no hatred in their hearts, it is a feast of Odin. I have told you many times before of the will of him whose voice I am as I watch the tongues of flame. It is his will that men learn to live together. These boys have heard the whisper in the heart which we have not heard. They have killed more buffaloes since the sun rose this morning than we have done in all

our lives and our fathers before us. They have not come to their full strength; they have not learned to shoot as far or as straight as we have done, but together they have done what no one of us could do."

Then Ang picked some long grasses from a tuft beside him and took out a single one. Holding it where all could see, he snapped it as if it were a spider's web; then he put two together and snapped them; afterward more and more until he had twisted a rope of grass which the strongest man could not break. He passed it about the circle, and each tried in vain to break it. Then Ang took it and held it high above his head where all could see, the women and boys as well as the men. "The single grass which the child can break is man alone; this rope of twisted grass is man united."

A shout of assent broke from the group: "It is the will of the Great Spirit." Then Wang, who had been restless in his place, leaped to his feet: "If we are to hunt together like the wolf, we must learn from him. Each pack has its head which all the others obey. When the geese fly to the south, a great bird who is wise always leads the flock. Let us learn from the beasts and the birds. Who shall be our chief?"

They all looked at Ang, and some one said, "Let Ang be our chief." But Ang shook his head: "I have told you for many years the will of Odin. I will do so still as I see it in the fire or hear it in the whisper to the heart, but my eyes do not

see as they did, my feet are not so swift in the chase, or my hands so strong at the kill. The head of the wolf pack is the strongest and the most cunning, not the oldest. The whisper within tells me that it is not time to choose a chief to-night. He must be proven first."

The men looked about on each other and knew that the words of Ang were wise. There was no one that they could all follow without question. The time to choose had not come yet. It came when — But that is a tale for another telling.

Then Om and Sut and the boys who had followed them were brought into the men's circle by the fire, and they told the story of how they had trapped the buffalo. It was Sut who told the story, and his eyes shone like stars and his voice bubbled like the brook. As he talked on, Wang would wag his head now and then, as much as to say: "See! like father, like son." The girls listened eagerly to Sut, but the older ones looked at Om, who sat a little back where the light did not shine so brightly on his face, and nodded their heads and said to each other, "Some day, perhaps, if the Great One wills."

From that time on men began to do things together as they had never done before. They hunted together and fished together. Groups of related and friendly families lived near, in favored spots, as Ang and Wang had done. And they had more to eat and more to wear. Fewer lost their lives in hunting the more dangerous animals. The

women and children were safer in the little villages than they had been in their lonely caves and huts.

And Om and Sut were remembered in the sagas of the tribe as those who taught men how to live together.

THE FIRST CHIEF

IV. THE FIRST CHIEF

THE years went by, and Om and Sut and their fellows became men. Their muscles hardened and the beard came upon their faces, and when they spoke at the council fire older men listened. They had grown more strong and more cunning. They had learned to hunt together so well that no one was hungry or without warm skins for his back and his bed. Some of them had taken mates from the girls who had ceased to laugh at them after the great slaughter at Death Valley. But Om and Sut seemed to be enough for each other. Day and night they were always together.

Oma grew anxious and said: "The years go by and you take no mate. It is not the man custom. There are many girls. I will choose one." But Om shook his head. "When Freya shows me one like Oma, but not before." And the mother could say no more.

One year, as the cold grew stronger, disturbing rumors came to the village of Angwang. Some young hunters who had gone far to the east had seen fires at night a long way off. The next night the fires had been nearer. Then Ang remembered that his father had told him that many days' journey to the sun-rising there were other men not like

themselves. Their hair was black, coarse, and straight, their cheek bones high and wide, and they hunted men as well as beasts. They killed the men and the children and took away the women. They came like the great tempest and left none behind to tell whence they came or whither they had gone. By a common instinct all the scattered families and groups gathered at Angwang. Men feared to go far to hunt. The terror of the dreaded foes grew greater, and food began to grow more scarce. Ang called the men together to take counsel. They did not dare build a fire, for fear it should be seen.

"The time has come," said Ang, "for the men to have a chief. Who shall he be?" "Let the one who can save us from the red men be our chief," cried some one. Many talked, and many at the same time, but no one seemed to know what to do, and the fear grew. At last Om, who had been silent, stood up, and all listened. "I have been silent because I am not so wise as many of you. I speak now, not because I am wiser than the old men, but because I am freer. I have no women or children in my cave to starve or be fed by others if I am killed. I and some who are like me will go and see who these men are whose terror has fallen upon us till we shake like the rushes by the river bank when the wind blows upon them. Who will go with me?"

Sut and Lack rose and joined Om, and together they slipped away in the darkness. They stopped

under the sacred oak to make their plans. They would travel by night and watch from hill tops and high trees by day and learn what these men from the east were like and what they wanted.

They provided themselves with three days' food and their finest weapons. Under the leadership of Om they journeyed all night and part of the next day toward the east, but saw nothing. After a few hours' rest they kept on through most of the second night. On the morning of the second day they reached the top of the Black Hills, and from the highest peaks they could see still another day's journey to the east. At first nothing could be seen but the wide expanse of forest, threaded here and there by streams, with occasional meadows by the river banks.

As the mist gradually lifted, they studied with care each meadow opening. The dim haze of morning gave way to the full blaze of day, and still their searching eyes found nothing to arouse suspicion.

But finally Om, whose eyes were the keenest of the three, saw on the edge of one of the farthest meadows what appeared to be a herd of buffaloes or possibly wild horses. After examining them as carefully as possible, he noticed that they did not seem to move about as a group of wild animals would do if feeding. Then he thought he saw smaller objects moving in and among the herd. What could they be? If they were men, surely the buffaloes or wild horses would not let them move about among them in that way.

At last the moving in and out stopped and the herd began to advance, going in single file like wolves. More strange still, on the back of each animal there seemed to be a moving hump. The three young men looked at each other with questioning and dread. What could these strange animals be? "If they were only men, I would not mind," said Sut. "Let us go back and consult with the wise ones," said Lack, whom the fear of the unknown was gripping. But Om shook his head: "It is for us to find out and not for the wise ones at the village. I will go forward and find out what these strange animals are. If I do not return by the next sunrise, Lack will go back to the village. If I do not return by nightfall of the same day, Sut will return also, and may Odin help you."

They tried in vain to persuade Om to go back with them or at least to wait until they could see more from their lookout. "If I wait," said Om, "it may be too late to warn the villagers — if it is the red men in disguise." So he took his share of the food, and having fixed the directions in his mind by studying the sun, the slant of the shadows, and the direction of the wind, he slipped down the hill-side and vanished into the forest. Sut and Lack watched him anxiously. Their fears grew, after Om had left, and if it had not been for their love for Om and their dread of what would be said if they returned alone, they would have fled from the mystery they dreaded. It was Sut who

finally said, " If Om can go on, we can at least stay the appointed time." So they settled down to that hardest of all tasks, waiting, when the fever of unrest is in the blood and the legs twitch to be going.

Meanwhile Om was making his way through the trackless forest with the skill of one born in the wild. In the excitement of rapid motion his fears left him. He picked his way by the slant of the light, by the moss on the trees. Sometimes he climbed a tree to test the wind and see if he could catch some guiding object. His plan was to strike the river on whose banks the meadow lay and then follow it. If the strange animals or men were coming east, they would follow the stream. At the very thought of them a chill of fear crept up to the roots of his hair. Hour after hour passed. He took a little of the food which he carried and drank often at the numerous brooks. A leopard in the tree top glared at him and was about to spring, but Om was gone before it made up its mind. Then a big bear sniffed at his track and the leopard decided that it had other business. Now and then a pair of timber wolves would follow his trail for a short distance, but they were full-fed and they did not altogether like the strange man-smell.

It was not until almost nightfall that Om reached the banks of the river. Exhausted with the day's journey and the excitement, he decided to find a sheltered place where he could see and not be seen, and wait. If the dreaded ones were coming this

way, he would gain nothing by going to meet them. So he found a bluff which overlooked a small meadow by the river bank and lay down to rest and watch. Overcome by fatigue, he fell asleep, but was awakened by strange noises, just as the sunlight was leaving the tree tops. Some heavy animals were crashing through the woods and drawing near the meadow. There were hoarse cries — men's voices, but unlike any that he had ever heard. He peered out through his screen of ferns and looked in fear and dread at the fringe of the forest from whence the strange noises came.

The crashing and shouting grew louder and louder, the boughs parted, and there came out upon the open a man — a red man with black hair. Om shuddered at the size of him and his savage look. Behind him, led by a rope of twisted grasses, was a horse, such as Om had sometimes seen on distant plains, wilder even than the deer; but this horse followed the man as a child follows its mother. Behind the first man came another, and another, each leading a horse. On the backs of some of the horses were lashed skins and strange dishes and weapons. Man followed man until it seemed as if the whole meadow was filled with the most savage-looking group Om had ever seen. Even the men whom he had beheld in his troubled dreams as a child had not been so terrible. Last of all there came out of the wood a horse which was also led, and on its back was — Om rubbed his eyes and looked again — a woman, though she was

not a red woman. It was too dark to see clearly, but her hair was not straight like that of the red men, but waved like the water when the wind blows upon it gently.

The horse on which the woman rode was led to the very center of the meadow, and as the woman was taken down Om could see that her hands were tied behind her with thongs. Some of the men made a rough bed of skins and placed the woman upon it. Then they untied her hands and tied her feet together instead. Om wondered why they needed to take such pains to keep one woman amongst so many men. Then they brought food and made a rough screen of skins about her.

The men tied their horses where they could feed on the grass of the meadow and ate from something which they carried in skin bags on the backs of their horses, and then they lay down to sleep on piles of leaves.

At last all was still and dark, and Om lay and thought and thought. These were the red men who hunted for men. They came from far because the four feet of their horses could carry them and their burdens. But they must have come from a country where there were many meadows and not so many trees. Here a man could travel faster than any animal with four feet except the wolf. Why should these men of the plains tear their way through the woods? And the woman with the hair like Oma's, with hands tied? What did it all mean? Om could not read the riddle,

but some things were plain. The red men were going straight to the village of his people. In three days, or four at the most, they would be there, and what could his people do against these men? They must be stopped before they came to the village. With the horses there was only one way that they could get through the hills, and that was by a narrow pass through which ran one of the brooks to feed the stream by which they were camped. The red men must be stopped there. But how could it be done? The pass was a day's journey; the village three hard days. He could not stop them alone.

As he lay and thought, a desperate plan came to him. The horses were tethered together at one end of the meadow. He remembered that the ground was soft and the stakes were not driven in very deeply. If he could frighten the horses, they might bolt and pull their tether stakes and be lost in the woods. That might delay the red men till he could send word to the village and get help.

Om crept down from his hiding place and crawled like a fox towards the horses. Every now and then his ears caught the stealthy sounds of other creepers, and he wondered whether he might not feel their fangs in his neck before he had accomplished his purpose. Sometimes he saw yellow eyes in the dark, but the Great One must have been with him, for nothing harmed him. At last he got near the horses, who were snorting uneasily, afraid of the things they had heard and smelled in the dark

about them. Waiting till all was quiet, Om dashed at the horses, with blood-curdling yells, which seemed to combine all the most dreaded noises of the wood, the shriek of the hyena, and the cry of the gray wolf as he leaps upon his prey.

In an instant all was confusion. The horses, with wild snorts of terror, bolted. The shouts of the men only added to their fear, and they dashed into the woods. Om did not wait to hear what the red men would do. Sight was impossible, as the night was moonless and there was no fire. As fast as possible he groped his way along the river's bank, now falling over roots and tangled vines, and now splashing through the haunts of the deadly watersnakes. He had no time to think of any other enemies than the red men. It might be that the hidden enemies of the wood and water would forget their hatred of man for to-night. At any rate he must get on, get on!

The night was like a black dream, long drawn out. Sometimes Om wondered dully if he had not dreamed it all. But as the morning light began to filter into the darkness of the wood, Om's brain cleared and he went faster and faster. If the full strength of man when men were young had not been his, he would have fallen by the way.

When it was light enough to see, he climbed a tree and looked off. The stream had led him right. The hills loomed above him. He was almost at the pass through which the red men must go if they went west.

As he came into the narrow gorge, he noted with satisfaction how the rocks rose up straight on either side. The men would have to go in wolf-file. Then his people on the rocks above would hurl down great stones and crush them as the bullocks had been crushed in Death Valley.

Before the sun had climbed so high that the tree trunks cast no shadow, Om reached the spot where Sut and Lack were anxiously waiting. Lack was sent hot foot to the village to bring the men to guard the pass, while the others remained to watch.

While Om had been gone, Sut had set some snares for the wild hares which were very numerous, so that the young men had food for several days and could give their undivided attention to the pass. Om went to the eastern entrance and Sut to the other end, and they rolled all the loose stones which they could find to the edge of the cliffs so that they could be pushed down on the red men.

It was strenuous and exhausting labor, and anxious fears made it even harder. Notwithstanding the fierce labor of pushing the great stones into position, the hours seemed to drag with snails' feet. Every moment they expected to hear the din of the coming of the red men, but night came at last and there was no sign of them. By morning the villagers would be there, if Lack had been swift and the men courageous. Om was so exhausted by the sleepless night and the terrific labors of the day that he fell asleep as soon as the shadows began

to fall. Sut found him lying on a moss-covered rock and thought him dead at first. Remembering how long he had been without sleep and how much he would need strength on the morrow, Sut let him sleep and kept his lonely watch. As for himself, sleep was out of the question. Every nerve was tense and every sense alert. The crackling of a dry twig warned him of the stealthy movement of some wild animal, but he dared not light a fire. He leaped to his feet and grasped his stone axe at the sudden hoot of an owl.

As the darkest of the night passed and gave way to the dull gray of morning, Sut also fell asleep, and the two young men lay as motionless as if carved from the rock on which they slept. They saw nothing, heard nothing. They did not hear the crunch of approaching footsteps; they did not see the face which finally looked out through the screen of a near-by thicket — a face which appeared and disappeared in a most mysterious manner.

The light grew brighter and still the men slept, when a woman stepped out of the thicket and sprang lightly upon the rock on which they lay. She was scantily clothed in a loose tunic of deerskin which was torn from struggling with the thickets of the forest. Her bare arms and ankles were terribly scratched and bleeding; her hair, though she had evidently tried to braid it, hung in wild disorder about her face. She stepped upon the rock as lightly as a leopard and stooped down and studied the faces of the sleepers. First she studied

the face of Sut, but turned with a shake of her head to Om. She leaned over him so long and looked so steadily that Oma might have feared for her son if she could have seen. At last, apparently satisfied with what she saw in the face of Om, she kneeled down, and with her face close to his, blew gently on his closed eyes. Om stirred and then opened his eyes and lay perfectly still, looking up into the face of the woman — eyes blue as the sky, hair yellow gold like the grass of the river meadows before the snow comes. It was like the face of Oma, only younger and more beautiful; it was the face which he had seen in his dreams and which had made the faces of all the women of his tribe seem ugly. It must be a dream, but no, she breathed, the drops of morning dew were on her hair; her eyes questioned him, challenged him; he had never been able to see the eyes of the dream woman. The blood leaped in his veins and he knew that he was not dreaming. She had come at last, the woman for whom he waited.

As he rose to his feet, the woman drew back, putting her fingers to her lips to signal silence. She pointed with her bleeding hands to the east and shook her clenched fists as if at some invisible enemy. She pointed to the marks of thongs of rawhide which had cut into her wrists and ankles and to her bruised feet. Then she knelt by Om's side and put his hand upon her head. At the touch of her hand Om trembled as a leaf trembles in the

breeze, and then he stood straight as a young fir and raised his free hand towards the rising sun. This was his woman! The Great Spirit had sent her to him. He shook himself like a young buffalo, rising from his lair. He seized his stone axe and waved it above his head; now his strength should be as the strength of ten.

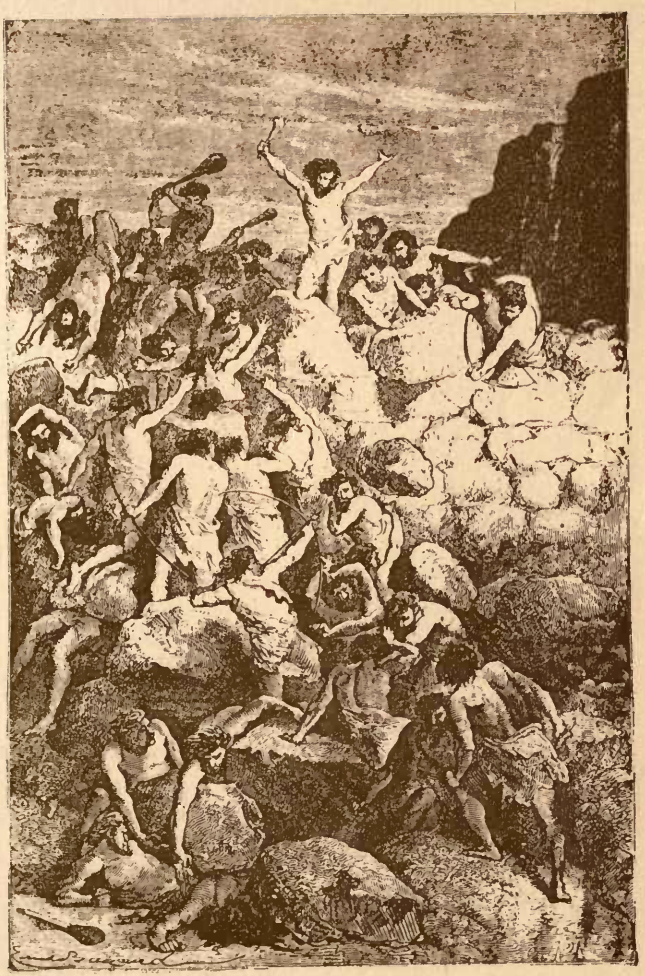
But the woman still knelt. Om looked down on her, and the tide of love and pity rose till it seemed as if it would choke him. He lifted her gently to her feet and made her sit on a cushion of moss. He brought her some of the hare's meat which they had saved, and watched her eat it hungrily. Then he brought water from a spring in his cupped hands and bathed her poor bruised feet, crooning over her like a mother over her first born. And the woman followed his every motion with her eyes as a dog follows those of his master. Not a word was spoken, but in the childhood of the race lip language was less needed than now.

Om did not need to be told. This was the woman whom the red men had carried as a captive. She had escaped. She was his. No man, red or white, should take her from him. He stood before her and pointing to himself said, "Om," and the woman repeated it after him in a voice which was as sweet as the love song of the wood thrush, and pointing to herself said, "Ulma." "Ulma," breathed Om in a voice so low that it did not waken Sut, but it had in it both a claim and a challenge. For the moment Om forgot all

but Ulma. She was the first to remember. She leaped to her feet and pointed to the mouth of the pass. Men — the red men — were already filing slowly out of the woods and approaching. In a flash Om was the fighting man ready to give his life for his tribe and his mate. He roughly wakened Sut, told him who Ulma was, and pointed to the red men entering the pass. A single look at them was sufficient to drive all other thoughts away. Even in the dim light it was easy to see what kind of men they were. They were wolf men, cruel, relentless, hunting in packs and fearing nothing.

So intent were they that they did not notice the approach of Lack and the villagers till they were almost upon them. Every man who could carry a weapon and could make the journey was there. Ang was there, and even Wang, though he puffed and panted and had not breath left to speak. Nothing was said, but Om was recognized as leader by common consent. Under his direction the villagers took their place at the narrowest part of the pass, piled great rocks along the edge of the cliff, and waited for the coming of the red men.

At last they came, all unconscious of the nearness of an enemy. They came slowly, for they had to carry burdens which before had been carried by their horses, and they were evidently in a very ugly mood. As they stumbled along, their leader lashed them with his tongue and sometimes with a rawhide whip which he carried. When they



arrived at a spot where the sides of the pass came so near to each other that a man could almost leap across, Om gave the signal, and the villagers, with a terrible war-cry, hurled the rocks down upon the red men. They ran forward, they ran back, they huddled together, but there was no escaping the terrible hail of stones. No thought of mercy entered the minds of the villagers. They were fighting for their homes, their women, and their children.

At last the shouting and groaning ceased. The crash of the hurtling stones was followed by no human cries. Nothing could be heard but the complaining of the brook and the hoarse cries of the vultures who were gathering from far and near in answer to the call of blood.

The blood lust was hot in the veins of the villagers, and forgetting the exhaustion of their long journey and the labors of the morning, they clambered down the sides of the pass to exult over the dead bodies of their enemies and to strip them of their weapons; and Om and Ulma found themselves alone with Ang upon the top of the cliff. In some mysterious way Ulma had found time and the means to braid her hair and wash the blood stains from her face and hands. Om thought with pride that no woman whom he had ever known, except his mother, would have done so. Taking Ulma's hand in his, he led her to his father: "The Great One has sent her to me. I slept, and when I awoke she had come with the light of the sun.

She was captive to the red men, but she escaped when their horses ran into the deep woods. She is my woman; I will take her to my cave and she shall be to me what Oma has been to thee."

As Ang saw the young man, now taller than himself by half a head and more powerful than any man of his tribe, his breast swelled with pride. There was none like him among all the men of his race. And the face showed something finer than mere brute force. Thought had already begun to shape the features to finer mold, and love had softened and refined them. At last the Great Giver had sent a chief whom men could obey and love, and he was the son of Oma. His thought went back to the bitter winter before the gift of fire. This young giant was then a tiny child, withering before the cold breath of the snow demon. Surely the ways of Odin were wonderful.

Then he turned to Ulma with jealous questioning in his eye. Who was she? Was she worthy to be the mate of the son of Oma, the beloved of the All-Father? With critical care he studied her face, her form, her bearing, and his look softened. Of slighter build than Om, she was larger than the women of his race. Every line of her lithe body suggested power as well as a certain grace rarely seen among the women of the young world. She was fit to be the mother of chiefs. But his eyes lingered longest on her face. As she looked at Om and then at him, her face shone with love and a prophecy of things to come which stirred the heart

of the priest of the Fire Spirit. In her and in her children should be fulfilled the visions which he had seen so often in the secret cave at the heart of the fire.

At that moment the sun, which had been slowly climbing the eastern slope of the mountain, looked down upon them. A beam of light touched the heads of the young man and woman with gold and that of the old man with silver. Pointing with his right hand to the sun and raising his left in attitude of benediction, Ang said: "Look, the Great One smiles upon you; you shall be the children of the Sun. Walk together in the light."

For a moment they stood in silence under the benediction of the light, the young man and woman thinking of each other, the old man of things to be. Then Ang spoke to Om in a tone which brought him back at once to the realities of the present: "Listen! The men below us are without a leader — they are like wolves, like vultures. Go, lest they forget that they are men and Odin forget them. Leave Ulma with me. I will take her to the cave of Oma and prepare the people for thy coming."

It was just at nightfall that the victors came into the village of Angwang. Ang had brought the news, and all were ready to receive them. A great fire had been lighted on the altar of the Fire Spirit. At the first shout of the coming men, the women and children filed out of the village to meet them, and lined the path on either side. In front

of them marched Om and Sut. Om's eyes looked straight before him, forgetful of all but one. Sut beamed on all.

The men bore on their shoulders the plunder of the red men. There were weapons of strange shape and even stranger material. There were axes and spears of something that was harder than stone and had an edge finer than the sword grass. There were tunics made, not of skins but of cunningly woven fibers. And strangest of all, they led behind them a horse, which followed them as a child follows its mother. That night, as they sat about the fire, the strange weapons and garments were passed from hand to hand. Sut stood upon a rock in the full light of the fire and told the story of the discovery and destruction of the red men, and the story lost nothing in the telling. Om sat a little in the background with Ulma at his right and Oma at his left, while Ang stood behind them, looking steadfastly at the fire with far-seeing, prophetic eyes.

After the tale had been told and retold and the curiosity of all satisfied, Wang pushed Sut from his rock platform and made the speech of his life, though he himself wished that he could have made it longer. But that was impossible, for after the first sentence no one listened to him and his voice was drowned in the shouting. In fact, he was even pushed off the platform by some girls who wanted to see all that happened. He would have resented it had he not been so fat. And this is what Wang

expected to be the beginning but which turned out to be the whole speech. "Let Om, the son of Ang, be chief." Immediately men, women, and children shouted, "Let Om be chief." Wang started again, but only to be silenced by the shouts, "Let Om be chief."

And so Om became the first Chief of the men of the North, and Ulma — But the words can wait.

THE SMOKE WAY

V. THE SMOKE WAY

AND Om took Ulma to the cave he had dug in the side of the hill which furnished homes for the village of Angwang. He made it bigger and finer than any in the village. "He is Chief and must have the best," thought the men who helped him. "It is to be the home of Ulma," thought Om, and nothing could be too good for her. After the cave had been hollowed out, it was lined with stones and then chinked with moss. In the warmest and driest corner was a couch made of spruce boughs, moss and leaves, and covered with the skin of a great bear which Om had killed. A round flat stone at one side served as a table. By it was a rough stone shelf on which were baskets woven by Oma and pots of curious design made by Suta. On still another shelf were various woman's tools given by women of the tribe, for the wife of their chief must lack nothing. There were needles made of bone for sewing skins. Some of the smaller and finer were made from the bones of fish caught in the river. The larger were cracked and the splinters worked into shape by grinding them on rough stone. There were stone made from the small bones of deer which had been

knives of many shapes. Some were used for cutting flesh, others for scraping skins, or digging the marrow from bones. The women had given their best, and nothing was lacking, as they thought, for comfort and luxury.

On one side of the cave home of Om and Ulma were hung the best of the weapons and plunder taken from the red men, axes, spears and knives of hardened copper or bronze, and tunics of woven cloth of various colors. At the doorway, where they could be caught by one rushing out, were the tried and trusted weapons of the new chief. There was a wooden-handled stone axe or bludgeon, made by lashing a split stick to a groove in the axe head, with thongs of rawhide. There was a bow as tall as a man which only a few men were strong enough to bend. A quiver was filled with arrows tipped with flint flakes fastened in place by a most wonderful glue which would resist anything but fire. Then there were flint knives of all shapes with handles of various lengths. As the men and women of Angwang came to look at the home of their chief, they felt sure that he had all that heart could desire. There had never been any one so rich as their chief.

But Om was not satisfied. It was not good enough for Ulma. As the winter came on, the cave was often damp and cold, and the heat from the fire outside did not penetrate it. Ulma, whose home had been in the south, often shivered, and it made the heart of Om cold. So he sat before the fire in silence and pondered. There were things

which the wisest men of his tribe, even his father Ang, did not know. They did not know how to make weapons of the dark brown metal; they did not know how to weave cloth. His father had learned how to bring fire from the flint; his mother had learned how to bake the clay so that neither fire nor water would harm it. Perhaps the All-Wise had other secrets. He closed his eyes and talked to the Holder of Mysteries: "Teach me to keep the cold from the home of Ulma." When he looked up again, his attention was drawn to the fire, which burned in a kind of rough open fireplace. Three flat rocks formed a kind of chimney. At the lower opening the fire burned more brightly than anywhere else. From the top the smoke streamed out. Why not build a fire in the cave and let the smoke go out through a hole in the roof?

The next day he made a hole in the roof and placed a flat stone in such a way as to keep the rain from beating down into the cave. They built a fire inside, directly under it, which burned brightly so that the cave was warm and light, and Om's heart was filled with pride — but it was short-lived. The wind changed and the smoke filled the cave till he could hardly see Ulma. Finally they had to go out and crouch about the fire outside till the smoke had cleared away from the inside of the cave. The villagers shook their heads and said to each other: "Om is a great chief, but even he cannot build a fire in a hole in the ground. The Fire Spirit loves the open air."

But Om was not satisfied. He lay awake far into the night, thinking, thinking, but to no purpose. In the morning he went to hunt with a heavy heart. Ulma's face was white and she coughed. He heard the dry hard cough when he stopped at some distance to listen. Each cough seemed to strike him a dull blow above his heart. He started to go back, but what was the use? They must have food.

That day his hunting took him far from home and it was night before he had made his kill, so he prepared to spend the night in a cave at the foot of the Black Mountain. He dragged the carcase of the deer which he had killed into the cave and then made a fire at the mouth of the cave, striking sparks from two flints into the dry moss which he always carried. As he sat by the fire warming himself and broiling some of the meat of the deer for his supper, he noticed that the smoke, instead of going up outside the cave, was sucked into it and then came out from a cleft in the ledge higher up. Forgetful of his hunger and weariness, he leaped up and went into the cave. It was warm and dry and free from smoke. He had built his fire directly under a rift in the ledge, which acted as a natural chimney. He piled more wood on the fire, but still the smoke went up. He threw green wood on the fire till it threw off clouds of smoke, but it all went up through the crevice and left the cave free. Here was the secret for which he had sought. His heart was filled with thankfulness.

Om slept but little that night. He started up from short dozes to pile fresh wood on the fire and watch the smoke as it poured up its stone channel, like a river between its banks. It seemed as if morning would never come, but it did, and he sped swiftly home.

When he appeared with the carcase of the deer on his shoulder, he was greeted with shouts of welcome, but he saw only Ulma. As she broiled some of the venison over the open fire, he told her of his great discovery, and his eyes eagerly studied the cave and the hillside. He would make a path for the smoke like that in the cave on the Black Mountain.

Without waiting to rest, he began his work. He brought flat stones and piled them up at the door of his cave. Then he made a new hole in the roof, not like the old one in the center, but close to one of the walls. Finally he made a rude chimney with a place for the fire at the bottom. At first he worked alone and the villagers looked on with critical wonder, but at last they were compelled by his faith and helped with good will.

When it was finished, the whole tribe gathered to see what would happen when the fire was built. Would the smoke climb the stone path as the chief thought? For the first time Om began to doubt and he hesitated to build the fire. He beckoned to Ang. Perhaps the Spirit of the Fire would be better pleased if Ang should build it. So Ang built the fire with great ceremony, and the people

looked on in awe and silence. The moss and dry sticks were carefully arranged. Then Ang took two flints in his hands and turning to the east, repeated the solemn fire chant:

Spirit Red, Spirit Red,
Is thy hunger fed?
Spirit White, Spirit White,
Give to us thy light.

Sparks leaped from the struck flints into the moss. A tiny spot of light like a glow worm, a flame like a red tongue, and then the hungry fire roaring over its prey.

The tribesmen gave a great shout, but Om looked anxiously at the new-made chimney. At first the smoke went up and out, but with a sudden change of wind the smoke began to creep through the chinks and fill the cave. Om's heart sank within him. Wang muttered, but so that all could hear: "I told you so. You cannot drive the black breath of the fire as you would a kid."

Thoroughly discouraged, Om sat upon a rock with his head buried in his hands. With tears in her eyes Ulma came and laid her hand upon his shoulder, but he took no notice. One by one, the villagers went away, saying to each other, "It may be that the Spirit of Odin has left him."

For a while Ulma stood silently by Om, trying in vain to comfort him; then she turned to look at his work. The smoke was not so bad as it had been when there was only a hole in the roof, but

still it came out between the cracks very badly. Womanlike, her thought was first of Om. If she could only stop the smoke, it would bring joy to the heart of Om. Odin had showed the secret of the clay to Oma; why should he not show the secret of the smoke to her? "O Thou who knowest the things which are hidden from us, show me the secret."

As she fell on her knees, she touched a mass of clay which she had been molding, and the secret was hers. She leaped to her feet and taking the moist clay plastered the chinks in the stone chimney. When the last one was filled, the fire burned bright and not a breath of smoke came into the cave. With a glad cry she called Om. He looked long and earnestly at her work, but longer and more earnestly on Ulma, with a look which had never been seen on man's face before. In it there was both love and reverence. "The Great One has shown thee the secret that was hidden from me. Thy wisdom is greater than mine, as my strength is greater than thine. Thou shalt be called the Wise Woman."

And Ulma's face shone like the sun just risen from the sea, but she only said: "Thy heart was heavy; the Revealer spoke to me that I might make it light."

Then Om called the men and women and children of the village and showed them what Ulma had done — how the fire burned and yet the air of the cave was not darkened by its choking breath. And when they had seen what she had done he took

Ulma by the hand and led her where all could see her, and knelt down before her and placed her hand on his head: "To Ulma, wife of Om, the All-Seeing One has given wisdom; when she speaks, listen, for the secret of secrets is hers."

And from that day those who were troubled and in the dark came to the wise woman in the cave of Om, and they called her the Seer, for she saw what was hidden from their eyes.

THE FIRST MILKMAN

VI. THE FIRST MILKMAN

AS time went on, the village of Angwang grew larger. Not merely were the numbers swelled by the children that came to the first comers, but by new families that wanted the comradeship and comparative safety of the village life. Yet there was one difficulty which increased with the size of the village. Game grew more and more scarce, the hunters had to go farther and farther for it, and the supply of edible fruits and nuts within reach of the village was not equal to the demand. It became clear to Om and the elders of the village that something must be done. Either the villagers must scatter or they must move to a new hunting ground. But they dreaded to do either. They had grown attached to their pleasant homes by the river and did not want to go back to the old separation and solitude. So they lingered on, and the food supply grew less, and hunger often gripped them and the shadow of famine hung over them. The men went on hunting trips that lasted for days and the women saved every scrap of food, but more and more went hungry.

Something must be done. Om and the hardier men took long journeys looking for new hunting

grounds and village sites where nuts and fruits and wild grains were more plentiful. On one of these trips they followed the river many days' journey. As they went on, the country became more and more open. The river meadows spread out wider and were covered with grasses bearing sweet grain which satisfied hunger. Great flocks of wild fowl fed upon them and grew fat. They were so tame that Om and his companions killed large numbers of them and feasted until it seemed as if they could never be hungry again. Here was food enough and to spare, but it was many days' travel from the village and there were no sheltering hills. So they returned to the village carrying some of the wild grain and as much of the wild fowl as they could.

The night after they returned all the villagers gathered about the campfire and feasted upon roasted ducks and geese and tasted the new grain. Some were for moving at once to the plains below, where food was so plenty, but the wise ones shook their heads and reminded the others that the birds stayed only for a short time to feed upon the ripe seeds and then went on. Then the grain would be scattered by the winter winds and there would be neither food nor shelter. But Sut and some of the younger men were not satisfied. The village was good, but plenty of food was better, even though it might not last for long. Then the spirit of adventure stirred them. Since the slaughter of the red men life had been rather tame at the village. Finally nearly a third of the village de-

cided to go with Sut to the plains. Om longed to go too, but his duty was with those who stayed. His father and mother were growing old and had to depend largely upon his hunting, and Ulma nursed twin boys in his cave.

It was a sad day when Sut and the pioneers left, perhaps saddest for those who remained. Ang watched them, as they filed past him, with a sinking heart. It was the passing of the old order. He knew how Om fretted at being one who stayed while others went. Still he could do nothing, and perhaps, after all, it might be the will of the Great One.

Om had little time for brooding. It is true there were less mouths to feed in the village, but there were also fewer hunters. Day by day he made wider circles in his hunt for game. The mother must have more food, for even now the boys often cried, hungry at her breasts.

One day he came upon a wild goat with two kids pulling at her full udder. As he was instinctively drawing the string of his great bow to send the death dart to the goat mother's heart, something stopped him, it may be a breath from the Great One. Was not the goat mother's milk better than the goat mother's dead body? Why not take her alive and see if the twin boys would not thrive on her milk as the kids were doing?

Om lowered his bow and drew from a skin pouch at his side a curious sling made of two smooth stones attached to the ends of a bit of

rawhide about six feet long. Grasping the connecting thong a few inches from the middle, he whirled the stones swiftly about his head and hurled them at the goat. One of the stones went between her hind legs and her fore; the other went in front and then swung back, swinging about the forelegs till they were bound so tightly that she could not move. In a moment Om had her fastened securely and was striding along the home trail with the goat on his shoulder and the two kids bleating behind him.

Great was the surprise in the village when Om appeared with a live goat on his shoulder. No one had done anything of the kind before. Why not kill and eat it at once, as men had always done? Many were hungry and smacked their lips, thinking how good goat's meat would taste. But Om said nothing and strode to his cave. Ulma came out of the cave with the twins at her breasts. The first thing she noted was the two kids, who bleated pitifully at Om's heels. Perhaps the hungry cries of her own children stirred a new sense of sympathy, and she said to Om, "The poor kids, why not let them live?" But Om's mind was full of other things. He pointed to the babies in her arms. "They are hungry." He pointed to the full udder of the goat. "There is milk." But Ulma started as if she had been struck. "The sons of Om shall not touch the breasts of a goat." She stood with flashing eyes straining the children to her dry breasts. Om stood silent with eyes downcast. He

had hoped — but no matter, if Ulma would not. He drew his knife to kill the goat, but Ulma stayed his hand.

Then the hungry twins wailed more pitifully than the kids, and Ulma's mother love conquered her pride. Laying the boys in Om's arms, she hurried into the cave and brought a small pottery bowl and pushed it under the dripping teats of the goat. Then she pressed them with compelling fingers till the white streams filled the bowl. Taking one of the boys from Om, she put the warm milk to his lips. It gave a surprised sputter and then drank faster and faster with great gasps of satisfaction till it could drink no more and fell asleep in her arms. When the brother had been fed and both lay sleeping in deep content, Ulma turned to Om and said reverently, " Forgive me, it was the gift of the All-Father."

And Om made a long tether for the goat and tied her where the grass was greenest, and the kids gamboled about her to the delight of the children of Angwang. And Ul and Ulu grew fat and rosy, and the heart of Ulma was light again.

By and by the goat grew used to her tether and the kindly hands which tended her and stood quietly when she was milked. And one day when her tether broke, instead of running away into the forest, she fed about the village, as if she had made it her home, and liked men for companions better than the wild animals of the woods and hills.

How the kids grew and ate, climbed, skipped,

and ate again! They raced with the children, and as the buck grew older it butted the smaller ones so that they found it safer to run into the shelter of a hut until he went by.

That was the beginning of new things in the village of Angwang. As time went on, each family had its small herd of goats. The goats fed themselves and then gave food to their owners. And so men learned that sometimes a live animal was worth a dozen dead ones.

RANG, THE RED MAN

VII. RANG, THE RED MAN

ON many of his hunting trips, especially along the banks of the river, Om had found many strange trails, unlike that of any animal he had ever seen. The trail always started by the river bank and never went very far from it. There was a single furrow, such as would be made by dragging a slab on the ground or such as might be made by some huge lizard's tail, but there were no footprints of any kind, only a series of holes on either side which looked as if they had been made with a pointed stick. Sometimes when Om set a trap near the river the strange trail would lead up to it, and he would find that the game had been taken.

At first he saw it only rarely, but as time went on he found it often. He set traps to catch the strange animal, but though they were often tripped there was nothing in them. He watched as patiently as a wildcat at a rabbit's hole, at places where he had often found the mysterious trail, but all to no purpose. His anger and curiosity gradually became tinged with that most ancient of fears, the fear of the unknown. In his efforts to solve the mystery he neglected his other hunting and often came home empty-handed, so that Ulma soon suspected that

something was wrong, and he had to tell her what was troubling him, as men have done from the beginning.

Together they puzzled over the riddle of the strange animal, till finally Ulma made the suggestion which led to its solution. Whatever it was it always came from the river and went back to it. Its home must be on the river or in it. So Om decided to go far up the river and drift down with the current on the trunk of a fallen tree.

A little above the spot where he had often seen the puzzling trail he found two dry tree trunks which he rolled to the water's edge and lashed together with vines. Then he cut a pole and pushed his rude raft slowly down the stream, keeping very close to the rushes and making as little noise as possible. Often he lay flat on the raft, drifting slowly with the current and steering with his hands. Flocks of birds rose from their feeding places with a deafening boom of wings. Turtles splashed clumsily into the water. Water snakes writhed swiftly away. Great fish darted away with a flick and flash of silver. Now and then a big lizard would yawn lazily at him and seem to estimate his possible food value. But he saw no trace of the creature which he sought.

The hours slipped by, and night slowly spread its mantle over the sky. The cool mist of evening began to rise from the river, and Om shivered, partly from cold but more from fear. He decided to go ashore and wait for morning, when the heart

of man was warmer. He rose carefully to his feet, balancing himself with his push pole, but he could find no place to land. At this point the river wandered through a great marsh, and a good half-mile of treacherous bog and reed thickets was between him and dry land. Om knew better than to try forcing his way through. If he could avoid the quagmires, he could not escape the dangerous snakes that swarmed in the rushes. There was nothing to be done but to pass the night as well as he could on the raft, for it was already getting too dark to see.

So Om drove his pole between the trunks of his raft as an anchor and lay down with his leather pouch as a pillow and the rough bark for a mattress. But it was not the hardness of his bed which kept him awake. Strange noises were all about him. The reeds rustled as if some great body were moving stealthily through them, and he sat up and grasped his great stone axe with every muscle tense and every nerve alert. Then all was silence, and he lay down again, only to be roused by a shrill cry from the air above him which seemed to go through his heart like an arrow. Overcome with fatigue, he dozed for a moment, only to be stabbed awake by a new horror, as something sinuous and slimy and cold slipped over his bare legs and slushed into the water.

When the night was at its darkest, Om was startled by a new noise. Some large body was pushing its way through the reeds not far from

him with a strange gurgling noise. Fresh chills crept up his back and pricked the back of his neck. His hair seemed to stiffen. He tried to lash himself to courage. He, a chief, son of Ang, slayer of buffalo and cave bear, destroyer of the red men, shivering like a child, afraid of the dark! But it was useless. Even a chief cannot stand before the black spirits of the marsh, unafraid.

Gradually the noise drew nearer, and Om detected a faint glow like a bog torch. It grew brighter, and finally a long black object slid out of the rushes a few feet ahead of him. His eyes struggling with the darkness, he studied the strange object until he caught its outline. A resinous pine torch, like a great red eye, glowed at the head of a long hollow log. Near the stern crouched a man pushing the dug-out through the water, not with a pole but with a paddle. With a deft turn of the wrist he brought his craft into the current and passed within a few feet of where Om crouched on his raft. The torch threw a weird light on the face of the paddler. It was the face of a red man, a face which glowed in the light of the torch like an ember in the fire. The bare arms which wielded the paddle looked like the bronze of the red man's weapons which Om had in his cave. With fascinated gaze Om watched the sweep of the arm and the play of the great muscles. He had never seen anything like them. One who came within their reach would have no more chance than in the hug of the great cave bear.

After all, he was only a man and he had mastered the red man before. The blood rushed through his veins again, and courage came back to his heart. He leaped to his feet and drew his bow, but the night dews had taken the life from the bow strings and it was useless. He reached for his axe to hurl it at the red man, but he was already beyond reach, and a sudden bend in the river soon hid him from view.

Cold and hungry, Om waited for the morning. At last it came with lagging steps, and he began to study the marsh about him. A few yards ahead of him was an opening in the rushes, and he pushed his raft where he could see better. There was a narrow break — so narrow that the rushes met above it, and just water enough to float the red man's dug-out. Om tried to push his raft into it, but it was too broad. Then he stood up and looked over the marsh. In the waxing light he finally saw what seemed to be a mound of rushes rising a little above the level of the marsh. He fancied too that he could see the shadow of an opening.

It was clearly useless to try to get there by foot, and there was no telling what he might find if he managed to force his way there. He remembered the huge arms of the red man. Such men must be respected even by Om. It was a problem for brains and not for brute force. He looked about for landmarks and saw on the shore above the marsh a great fir tree nearly a hundred feet in height. That should be his lookout, and

he would study the den of the red man from the top.

As rapidly as he could Om poled down the stream till he came to a place where he could land. He took care to bring his raft to some stones on the bank so that there should be no mark of his landing, and then he took off the vines that bound the logs together and pushed them into the stream. Leaping from stone to stone, he made his way to the high bank, leaving no trace of his coming.

After having visited some of his traps and fed himself for another fast of uncertain length, Om made his way to the tall fir tree and climbed to its top. From his lofty outlook he could see far up and down the river and across the marsh, but he was disappointed that he could see little more of the red man's hut than he had seen from the river itself. There was the mound of rushes, standing only a little higher than the rushes about it, a small encircling pool of water, and that was all. There was no sign of any living thing to be seen.

With the patience of primitive man, Om waited and watched through the long hours of the day. A great fishhawk lit on a branch above his head and flapped away with shrill cries of fear and anger. Squirrels chutted viciously at him and went their ways. A doe and her two fawns rested beneath him during the heat of the day. But there was no sight or sound of the red man.

Again the shadows began to lengthen, and Om's eyes grew heavy with long watching and lack of

sleep. He propped himself in an easy-chair of boughs, intending to doze for a moment, but fell asleep and slept far into the night. He woke with a start, hearing sounds beneath him, as if some one were dragging a log stealthily over the ground. His eyes tried in vain to penetrate the darkness; he could only follow the strange noise with his ears. Several times he started to climb down the tree, but the fear of the unknown checked him.

Finally the moon, which had been hidden by black clouds along the horizon, looked out with wide-open eye and flooded the marsh and river banks with silvery light. With the eye of an owl hunting for its prey he searched every open spot. At last he found what he sought. At the very spot where he had landed the morning before was the dug-out of the red man, and a little higher on the bank the red man himself. He was not standing erect or even creeping, and yet he was moving with considerable rapidity. He lay upon his belly on a flat slab some eight feet in length. His legs, or what was left of them, were lashed to it, and the man dragged himself along on this crude sledge by driving a sharpened stick which he held in each hand into the soil ahead of him and pulling himself to it. The mystery of the strange trail and of the robbing of his traps was explained. This must be one of the red men who had escaped the slaughter in the pass. The useless legs which trailed behind him had been crushed by the falling rocks, but he had lived.

Om's mind was filled with wonder. The red man must be indeed a man to keep alive in the wild without food, without friends, with only his hands and his head to help him. For days and weeks he must have suffered untold agony from his crushed limbs. Om passed his hands questioningly over his own powerful legs. Could he have done it? He shuddered at the thought. Only the Great One knew. Involuntarily he paid tribute in his heart to the manhood of the man who now crawled like a snail beneath him. He took his great bow and the straightest and sharpest arrow from his quiver, but he hesitated. Surely a man who could only drag himself along on his belly was not to be feared. To shoot such a man from a safe ambush was not worthy of Om, chief of the Angwangs. While he hesitated, the red man disappeared in the bush, the clouds again covered the face of the moon, and all was dark.

Om remained in his fir retreat till the morning light came, and slowly climbed down the tree, looking carefully for signs of the red man. Neither eye nor ear gave any hint of him. He prepared to swing himself from the lowest boughs to the ground. There was a rustle in a near-by thicket, a hum like that of a giant bee, and an arrow flew past him and buried itself in the tree trunk with a sinister "chut," pinning a flap of his fur coat to the bark. Nimbly as a monkey, Om put the tree trunk between himself and the dangerous thicket and swiftly climbed higher. He heard, or perhaps it was his

imagination, a hoarse laugh of derision from beneath him. It was a strange position for Om, warchief of Angwang, slayer of buffalo, cave man, and of the red men themselves. He was treed like a squirrel by the snail man. His powerful limbs were useless. If he had been ten times as powerful, he would have been just as helpless.

Om cursed himself for his folly. He had thought himself wise and a great hunter, but here he was, trapped by the man he had hunted. The foolish hare had as much wisdom as he! And what was strength without wisdom! The arrow of the red man was more than a match for his strength. Several times he slid down the tree a short way only to be sent back by an arrow. It was useless. If he had been bound hand and foot, he could not have been more helpless. The hours dragged by, and hunger began to grip him and thirst to parch his throat. How long would Ulma, Ul, and Ulu wait at the cave for the chief who never would come back? Who would keep the wolf of hunger from the mother and the babes? In his bitter meditation he forgot to watch his enemy and his ear was dull.

He was roused by the angry hum of an arrow which brushed his face. Another cut the thong of his quiver, and it fell to the ground. Om's heart sank within him. He was now a prisoner and without weapons. He heard the red man crawling about the trunk of the tree and picking up the arrows which he had dropped. He was helpless. Why did not the red man make an end of him as

he himself had made of a wild boar caught in a pitfall? After a time his attention was drawn by a sharp hand-clap to an opening near the tree. There was the red man, where for the first time he could see him in the full light of day. He crouched forward on his slab bed, his maimed legs crumpled beneath him. A great bow lay beside him and two quivers of arrows, one of which had been Om's, but his hands were empty. With gestures which could not be misunderstood he beckoned to Om to come down. When Om hesitated, he picked up his bow and drew an arrow from his quiver, so Om slowly climbed down the tree.

When Om reached the ground, he found that the red man had covered every way of escape. He had proof enough of his skill to know that a dash for liberty would mean sure death, so he stood unarmed and humiliated before the red man, thankful only that no one of his tribe would see him in his shame. In silence the two men studied each other. The white man stood erect, unbound, but he was a slave; his life belonged to the red man who crouched on crippled limbs before him. It was brain against brain and not brawn against brawn, and the red man had won. Death was bad, but shame was worse. Why did not the red man end it all and shoot him to the heart?

But the face of the red man showed neither triumph nor hate, only watchful intelligence. Its expression was as hard to read as that of the faces in the fire. Then the red man fastened a thong

of rawhide to the front of his sledge and signaled Om to pick it up and drag him. Om did so, wondering. Was he to play horse for the crippled giant? He wondered still more when the red man directed him, not to the bank of the river but to the trail which led to the village of Angwang. What did his strange captor mean to do? Did he mean to humble him before the men of the tribe?

Just before they came in sight of the village, the red man signed to Om to stop. Then he drew from in front of him the quiver which Om had let fall and tossed it to him. Om grasped it with feverish haste. Once more he had the weapons of a man and a chief, and he straightened himself; but no, he had not won them back, they had been given him as a father gives a plaything to a child. The balance of power was again his, but he could not abuse it. He looked questioningly at the red man. What should he do next? The face of the red man seemed as inscrutable as ever. He simply pointed again to the thong trace and the village, and Om again went on, drawing his strange load behind him, his wonder increasing at every step.

As the strange sledge drew near to the village, a great shout arose and the villagers came trooping out to meet them. When they saw the red man, some of them grasped their weapons angrily, but drew back at a command from Om. They were speechless with wonder. What did it mean? Was

he the captive of Om? Why then did he carry his weapons before him like a chief? Straight through the village marched Om till he came to his own cave, and Ulma came out with a glad cry to meet him. When she saw his strange load, she shrank back, pushing the twins behind her, and then she gave a cry of surprise and went forward to meet them crying, "It is Rang, the Red."

As she stood above him, the red man bowed so low that his face almost touched the ground and laid his weapons at her feet. The eyes of men had never looked on a stranger spectacle. The villagers stood about in a wondering circle. Om stood with the trace still over his shoulder. Rang bowed his great body over his helpless limbs. Ulma looked down at the prostrate man and the weapons at her feet with the look of a queen. Then she turned to Om and said in tones that could be heard by all: "This is Rang, once follower of the chief of the red men; when I was a captive, he cut the thongs that bound me and I escaped. His face is red, but his heart is like that of a white man. The Great One has spared his life." Then she stooped down and took his weapons and laid them in the hands of Om. Om hesitated a moment and then gave them back to Rang, saying, "Take them, they are the gift of Ulma."

That night they built a great fire upon the altar, and the chiefs sat long in council and listened to the story of Om, and at last Ang expressed the will of the tribe: "It is the will of the Great One.

The skin of Rang is red and his hair like the shadows of a night without stars, but he has the heart of a man and the courage of the great bear, with the cunning of the fox. He gave freedom to Ulma, wife of Om. He spared the life of Om when he had snared him like a bird. The Great One has held the mouths of the hungry ones of the woods so that they touched him not. He is loved of the Spirits. Let him be made a brother of the tribe!" And all the men shouted, "Let him be made a brother of the tribe."

And Ang took the sacred knife from the altar and cut his arm till the blood flowed. Then he lightly cut the arm of Rang and mingled the blood on his open palm, saying, "Rang, thou art by this token a brother of the tribe."

And so Rang became a brother of the tribe of Angwang and sat with the elders about the fire, but he was also the slave of Ul and Ulu.

RANG OF THE THINKING HAND

VIII. RANG OF THE THINKING HAND

THE coming of Rang made a great change in the village of Angwang. He was one of a race which had made many discoveries as yet unknown to the white race. He knew how to smelt and shape the bronze used in their weapons. He fashioned a loom on which Ulma and other women of the tribe wove cloth from the fibers of flax. He taught the men of the tribe to make dug-out canoes. But in addition to the knowledge which he inherited from his race he had a special inventive gift of his own. He came to be known as "Rang of the thinking hand." The crippling of his legs seemed to have diverted all the power of his nature to his arms and hands. It seemed to the villagers as if there were nothing beyond his powers.

From the very beginning the twins Ul and Ulu claimed him as their own, and he acknowledged the claim. At first he made cunning toys for them, and as they grew, weapons of finest quality suited to every stage of growth. He was both their friend and teacher. His big cave, with its smelting forge and many ingenious contrivances for making needed things, became a gathering place for the boys.

Under the teaching of Rang, Ul and Ulu became more skillful than any men of their race had ever been. Om and Ulma looked on with mingled amazement and pride at the wonderful things which the boys made. While the boys were small, Rang had shown no desire to leave the village, but as they grew old enough to hunt and the passion for wandering came upon them, Rang also grew restless. He would drag himself out where he could watch for the coming and going of the boys and turned a deaf ear to the villagers who wanted to have odd jobs done for them.

When the boys came home from their hunting and trapping, Rang listened eagerly to it all, but it was plain he fretted at not being able to go with them. And the boys, too, found that things were never quite the same without Rang. It was Ul, the bigger of the twins, who suggested a partial solution of the problem: "We are strong like young bullocks. We will draw you out as our father Om drew you to the village." At first Rang shook his head and said that he was too big and they were too small, but at last he yielded with ill-concealed delight. The wander instinct was on him as well as on the boys.

Rang fashioned a new sledge with double runners and a trace for each boy, with a flat broad shoulder strap. His usually impassive face shone like a face in the fire as the boys drew him swiftly down the village street and out into the woods. And Ulma smiled contentedly, for she felt that

the boys would be safe if Rang was with them and they could not go far if they dragged him, but that was a mother's mistake, as we shall see later.

At first the boys were satisfied to take Rang to their near-by traps, but they soon longed to go farther. One day Rang told them to take him up the banks of the river to the spot where his old home had been. Then he unfolded a plan which had been growing in his mind for a long time. They would cut down a great tree and make a dug-out large enough to take the three, and then they would go down the river as far as they could and see the Beyond.

Rang chose a great fir tree which he had girdled long before and which was now dry as a bone. First they built a fire about the trunk, keeping the fire from going too high by throwing water on it. When the trunk was thoroughly charred, they hacked it away with their bronze axes until the wood became too hard for the soft temper of the bronze. It took two days to fell the tree, another to cut off a twenty-foot length suitable for their boat. The next task was the most difficult and lengthy of them all, to hollow it out. First the top of the log was flattened, except at the ends, to where the gunwale was to be. Then red-hot coals from the fire, which they kept constantly burning, were piled upon it until enough of the trunk was charred to be dug out.

It was a long and strenuous task. Rang would not let the boys place the coals, but he kept them

busy bringing them, keeping the fire, and soaking the outside of the log with water to prevent the fire burning too deeply. After the log was hollowed out, Rang shaped the ends and gave a finishing touch by carving on the bow the head of a wolf. When it was at last finished and equipped with light ash paddles, the builders were very proud, and they had reason to be.

When the "Wolf" was ready to launch, Rang said to the boys, "I cannot help — you will have to drag it to the river." Ul and Ulu looked a little doubtful, but said nothing as Rang fastened the trace straps of his sledge to the boat. "Now," said he, "pull!" and they pulled with might and main, together, singly, and by jerks; but the big log only stirred a little. The boys looked at each other and Rang with disappointed looks. Would they have to get the men of the village to help them? Half the fun was doing it themselves and keeping it a secret. Rang's face was a blank. He looked as though he had never thought of the problem of getting the boat into the water. When he thought the boys had mastered the difficulty of the task, he called them to him. "Strength," he said, "is good, but thought," pointing to his head, "is better. Strength with thought is best." Then he cut a stout pole and showed the boys how to place a stone so that one could lift ten times his own weight. When it was put in place, Ulu, the smaller of the boys, could raise the bow of the boat with ease. Next they cut some rollers, under the direc-

tion of Rang, and placed them under the log. When that was done, one could drag it while the other steadied it and placed the rollers.

The next day the boys got the permission of Om and Ulma to go on a long hunting trip with Rang. They did not tell even their parents that they were going by the river and not by land. For food they took cheese made from goats' milk and flour made from nuts ground between two stones, and dried venison. Rang spent most of the day in testing the dug-out and teaching the boys how to paddle and how to guide it through the rapids, which were numerous, though not very dangerous. At night, when the villagers were sound asleep, they drifted quietly by and camped below the village for the night. They slept in the boat and early in the morning started for the Great Beyond. It was well that Ulma could not follow them with her anxious eye.

As they paddled down the stream, Rang sat in the stern and steered, while Ul, as the strongest, knelt in the bow ready to push the boat from any rock in the rapids through which they passed. Pulled by the current and pushed by the paddles, the boat went very swiftly down the river, and perhaps not even Rang realized how long it would take to work their way back. Wood and marsh and rugged bank slipped by them as in a dream. By night they had gone far. The river grew wider and wider as new streams joined with it and the country grew more and more flat. Sometimes the marshes

stretched away as far as the eye could reach. The boys thought only of getting on, but Rang looked anxiously at each stream as they passed. How should they know which to take when they came back, and they must come back, for these were Ulma's boys. But still they did not stop. A subtle fire in the blood drove them on from the safety and security of the old settlement out into the great unknown and would not let them stop. Each day's journey brought them into a stranger country. Different trees lined the banks, different birds flew above them, strange animals peered at them from the banks. While the country was low about them, great mountains, with cloud tips, loomed in the distance. And still the Great Beyond beckoned them. The faces of the boys grew thinner and their muscles harder. They talked less and looked more, looking straight before them as if they were sure to find what they sought just beyond the next curve in the river.

Each day they paddled longer and spent less time in preparing food and in sleeping. The tenth day they pressed on till the dark shut them in. That night a distant roaring disturbed their sleep. Sometimes they thought it was the noise of distant thunder; at others the noise of some great beast. In the morning they started early. Scarcely a word was spoken. The eyes of Rang were like coals of fire. Ul and Ulu seemed like men walking in their sleep. The river grew wider and separated into many streams, so that it was hard to tell which

to follow. The marshes were bigger and bigger and the grasses and reeds of a different kind. When they tasted of the water, it was too bitter to drink. And all the time the strange roaring was in their ears, growing louder and louder as they went on. Sweat streamed from the faces of the feverish paddlers, and yet sometimes they shivered. What was the Great Unknown which they approached? Were they approaching the caves of the Wind Spirits? Would the Spirits be angry? And still they kept on.

At last the canoe swept about a point covered with low brush and reeds, and their swinging paddles stopped in the middle of the stroke and hung dripping in air. The river suddenly widened, and its white banks reached to right and left as far as the eye could see. Before them it melted into the horizon. Water, water everywhere, as big and as blue as the sky. The boat beneath them began to pitch and toss and to rush swiftly out into the waste of waters though their paddles were still. As they drifted on, they were met by white-capped waves which tossed their small craft and splashed their faces with cold salt spray. Rang was the first to awake from the trance of wonder into which the sea had thrown them. The waves were growing rougher and rougher and the shore was slipping away from them. He gave a sharp command to the boys, and they turned the boat with difficulty and paddled with might and main for the shore. At last they reached it, dripping and exhausted, and dragged

their unsteady boat out on the white beach, out of the way of the hungry waves.

All day they wandered up and down the beach, watching the ceaseless beat of the waves, wondering at the many-hued and many-shaped shells and seaweeds. The boys swam in the salt water until Rang saw the splash of a great shark in their wake. Then they stretched themselves on the sand and studied the far-off horizon. "Some day," said Ulu, "we will make a great boat, twice as big as this, and paddle across the Great Water and see what is beyond." Rang shook his head. "Beyond is the home of the Spirits of the Wind. It is not good for men to go there." Ulu looked doubtful and said nothing.

As their supply of food was nearly gone, they began to look for game. The boys shot a few marsh fowl, but Rang made the great discovery that the clams and oysters which could be gotten at low tide were good when roasted over a fire. For days they wandered on the shores of the Great Mystery, drinking in its new delights, and yielding more and more to the charm which would some day draw them back to it from the ends of the earth. But at last the sense of duty awoke in Rang. What would Ulma and Om think when the days went by and the boys who were dearer to them than their own eyes did not come back? It was time to take the long homeward journey.

The first day's journey was not so bad as Rang had feared. For six hours the current was with

them, and they began to hope that Odin had changed the flow of the river to help them on their journey. But they were sadly disappointed when the tide turned and with painful effort they had to wrest each foot from the water as it rushed to the sea. The next day the current was against them all the time, and each day the current grew stronger and the rapids more numerous and swift. By landmarks which they remembered they knew that it took three or four days to cover the same distance that they had covered in a day coming down. It was a journey to tax the powers of the strongest. The great body of Rang lost every ounce of fat and seemed nothing but muscle and sinew and bone. Though the boys did not suspect it, he did the work of two as he paddled grimly behind them with big swinging strokes into which he threw the whole strength of his powerful body. And Ul and Ulu grew hard and fit. They were stripped to the waist as they paddled, and the summer sun painted their skin till it was almost as red as that of Rang.

When they had made about half the journey back, their first real trouble overtook them.

THE FIRST SAILOR

IX. THE FIRST SAILOR

EVEN Rang's iron frame could not stand any longer the tremendous strain which he had put upon it in his anxious care to save the boys. He woke one morning with sharp pain in his overworked muscles. No effort of his will could bring them to their accustomed task, and he lay groaning in the bottom of the boat, cursing the evil spirit which had tempted him to take the boys so far from their home. For the first time the boys were thrown on their own resources. Rang tried to persuade them to leave him on the shore and press on alone, but the boys would not hear of that. So they laid Rang on a bed of leaves in the middle of the dugout, and Ul took the stern paddle and Ulu the bow.

After a few hours' fighting against the current, sometimes losing more than they gained, they began to realize what the crippled Rang had done for them. It would take them weeks to make the rest of the journey, and it might be that they could not get up some of the rapids with his weight, without his skill and strength. As their food supply was nearly exhausted, they had to spend more and more time each day in hunting and they made but little

progress. The boys became men as they fought the stream.

Ulu was not so strong as Ul, and it fretted him that he could not pull his full share. One night, after a hard day's pull with little gain, they lay exhausted on the bank, and Ulu pondered. Rang had told them once that "Strength was good, but thought better, and thought with strength best." If he was not so strong as Ul, he must think more. As he thought, his eye happened to fall upon a tuft of floating grass which slowly drifted *up* stream. He sat up and watched more intently. Nothing was pulling it; it had no paddles, and yet it went against the current. The breath of the night wind was strong on his face as it blew up the stream. He leaped to his feet in excitement. It was the push of the wind that did it. Why should not the wind push their boat as well as the tuft of grass? He looked at Ul and Rang. They lay fast asleep. With light footsteps he crept down to the boat tied to the bank. Then he tore up a thick young cedar from its loose hold on the bank and propped it in the bow of the boat. Then he pushed out into the stream, taking Ul's place at the stern. When he got out into the sweep of the wind, he stopped paddling and waited. At first the boat almost stopped, and it seemed as if the drag of the current was pulling it back. Then the wind strengthened, and the cedar in the bow bent before it, and the boat began to go slowly forward. Ulu's heart throbbed with the joy of a great discovery. The

Revealer had showed the secret of the fire to Ang, of the clay to Oma, of the smoke way to Om, and now the secret of the wind to him. Again and again he drifted down the stream and was pushed up by the hand of the wind upon the cedar sail.

Ulu slept but little that night. As he heard the rush of the wind in the tree tops, he said to himself, "With the wind at his back the paddle of Ulu shall be stronger than that of Ul or even of Rang." In the morning he told his discovery to Ul and Rang. Ul shook his head and unconsciously stroked the swelling muscles of his arm. It was because Ulu was not so strong that he dreamed such things. Rang said nothing, but was soon lost in thought. He lifted his hand so that it caught the full force of the wind which had risen during the night. There might be something in it. If so, why had he not thought of it — he, Rang the cunning one, maker of many inventions? He looked at Ulu and shook his head. He was a mere boy; it could not be.

But as they were both fond of Ulu they let him put his cedar bough in front when they started. At first all went well, and both Rang and Ul began to think that the boat did go faster, but then a gust of wind swept down from a gully in the river bank and struck the rude sail on the side. In a moment the boat was capsized and the three were struggling in the water. Rang clung to the boat, and the boys towed it to the shore. Ul and Rang said nothing, but they looked much. When they

started again, Ul threw out the soaked cedar bough with a gesture more telling than words.

For a time Ulu was very downcast and Ul had to tell him rather sharply to stop dreaming and paddle. But as time went on Ulu's spirits rose. After all, the wind would push; only you must take care that he pushed in the right place. That day the current was so strong and they made so little progress that even Ul gave up and said that they must go ashore and rest. After they had eaten, Ul and Rang sat with their heads bowed in their hands. The water was too strong for them. They must try to make their way overland through the trackless forest. How could it be done, with the crippled Rang? They could not drag a sledge through such thickets as surrounded them.

While the others brooded moodily, Ulu slipped down to the shore, put another and bigger cedar in the front of the boat, and pushed out into the stream. This time the wind blew strong and steadily up the stream. When the boat felt its full force, it began to go against the current with a ripple of water at the bow. Ul sat up and rubbed his eyes. Rang slapped his hand upon his withered leg. "Thought is better than strength. It would have been better if we had thought more and worked less."

When Ulu returned from his short voyage, the attitude of the others was entirely changed. Their affection was now mingled with respect. Rang abused himself loudly. Why had he lain like a

log in the bottom of the boat? Why had he not used his head the more when he could not use his arms? He would begin now. If the Wind Spirit could push a dug-out against the current with such a small cedar, he would push it faster if there was something larger. He unrolled the woven blanket upon which he lay and which was the one luxury he allowed himself. Under his direction the boys fastened it with two sticks, one acting as a mast and the other as a sprit.

Their next start was more fortunate. The wind was strong and steady. The sail bellied out and pulled like a live thing, and they traveled farther that day than they had done in any three days before. After two months' absence they sailed into the little cove in front of the village of Angwang, and there was great shouting and rejoicing. Om and Ulma hovered about the boys as if they had been brought back from the land of dreams where live the men of old, and they forgot to punish Rang for taking the boys away.

And so Ulu became the first sailor and always heard the voices of the Great Water calling him. One day he answered.

THE GARDEN OF ULMA

X. THE GARDEN OF ULMA

AND Om and Ulma had a daughter Saxa, who grew to be more and more a comfort to her mother as the boys spent more and more of their time out in the forest. Rang, too, who did not wholly recover from his rheumatism and had to stay at Angwang after his one voyage of discovery, was her devoted slave. It was beautiful to watch the tender deftness with which the crippled giant tended her while she was a baby and played with her and made toys for her as she grew older. Rang again became teacher and devoted himself to it with the singleness of purpose characteristic of the man and perhaps of his race. And Saxa was an apt pupil. She had not the strength of the boys, but she had a deftness and skill which they lacked. And she heeded the words of her old teacher, repeated again and again, when she faced some problem a little too much for her powers: "Think, think, think."

While Om and the boys were away on long hunting trips, Ulma and Saxa and Rang were often left alone for weeks at a time. There were the goats to tend and a few simple domestic duties to perform, but time sometimes hung heavy on their

hands, and Ulma, now that her children were no longer babies requiring her constant care, would sometimes grow restive. She would say to Saxa, "I wish I were a man and could hunt and trap and rove where I wished." But Saxa was so young and had so much serious play on her mind that she did not understand.

And still Ulma fretted. She felt as strong as when she had escaped from the red men. She tired of weaving cloth on the loom which Rang had made for her. She did not like to crouch on the ground molding pottery, as many of the women did. When her men were away, she began to wander farther and farther from the village. She replied to the anxious protests of Om that she wanted to find herbs which were so bitter to the fever demon that he would fly away. In reality, though she scarcely knew it herself, she was searching for something which seemed worth doing. As she wandered, she collected nuts and fruits and wild grain, for no one in the village knew so well where things good to eat grew.

One day she found in a meadow some distance from the village a new grass with seeds larger and sweeter to the taste than any she had seen before. She selected some and took them home and grinding them into a coarse flour made cakes for Om and the boys when they came home. They ate all of them and wanted more. They had never tasted anything as good, and Ulma with true housewife instinct longed to give them more. On the next day

she went and gathered all that she could find and was preparing to grind it when a thought came to her, perhaps from the mind of the Great Revealer. If she ground all the grain, there would be one meal and that would be the end of it. Why not save the seed and plant it near the village? There would be more and she would not have to go so far for it.

So, instead of making flour from the wheat seed — for the new grain was wild wheat — she put it in a dry place, intending to put it in the ground in the spring; but then she remembered that the seed sowed itself in the fall. So she chose a level spot not far from her cave, and after burning the tall grass upon it, she scratched the surface with sharp sticks and sowed her seed.

Now there was no need to tell Ulma not to wander too far from the village. The birds were as fond of the wheat as her men, and she had to watch her field with unremitting care. Late in the fall the ground became green with the new wheat, and the face of Ulma shone. Her mother instinct had a new outlet in the soil.

But as soon as the wheat was up a new enemy appeared. Goats are not apt to pass by anything good to eat at *any* time of year, and new wheat seemed especially good at *this* time of year. Day and night Ulma had to watch her tiny wheat field with such help as Rang and Saxa could give. It was engrossing business, and Om sometimes grumbled a little if Ulma was chasing the goats when he

wanted something to eat. The villagers too were inclined to resent it when Ulma stoned their goats. All in all, she had rather a hard time, but she did not lack for occupation.

During the winter she had a rest, but in the spring her troubles began afresh. She grew thin and anxious trying to defend her precious wheat field from its numerous enemies, but her zeal never flagged. Saxa, however, often grew tired of watching the wheat field. Her mind was full of fancies, and she loved to sit by herself and let them lead her where they would. Often while she dreamed the goats got into the wheat, and Ulma would come flying out to drive them away and reproach her for her neglect.

After one of these excursions from the post of duty to the land of fancy, when the goats had been especially hungry and she very far away, Ulma was so angry that Saxa was frightened. She remembered the oft-repeated words of Rang: "When the thing is too big for you, think." And she thought. The goats loved wheat and they did not very much mind the few stones and sticks that were aimed well enough to hit them. But she remembered some thorn bushes that grew on the hill above the village, which were the only things the goat would not eat. The leaves were bitter as wormwood, and the crooked spines were too much even for the tough hide of a goat. If the thorns would only grow about the wheat field, she would not need to sit by the stupid grass and watch. But she could not

do it herself; the thorns were too sharp and it was too hard work. It was time for cunning thought, a kind of thought as old as Eve.

Now Saxa was almost a woman, and the young men of the village thought there was none like her. They looked at her out of the corners of their eyes as she passed. They brought the finest nuts and left them at the door of the cave of Om, and Ul and Ulu, who rose early in nut time, were full fed. Saxa seemed to see none of them and care for none, but old Suta, who saw other things besides the pots she fashioned, would nod her head and mutter: "Ah, these girls! They see most when they seem blind." At any rate, there were a dozen young hunters in the village who, as Saxa well knew, would do anything they thought she wanted. But there were things to be considered, and the next night Saxa was wide awake while the others slept.

Now there was a certain young man, not belonging to the village, whom she had seen sometimes, who seemed to her more like a real chief than any of the others. He was Let, the son of Sut, chief of the plainsmen, and he came sometimes to see his grandfather Wang and his grandmother Suta. As time went on, he came more and more often, and Suta — and it may be Saxa — noticed that he always came by the cave of Wang. As she lay awake and thought, an inspiration came to her. Those who cared most for Saxa would build the longest piece of thorn hedge for her mother's field, and Let was coming to the village to-morrow.

Early the next morning Saxa went to the house of Wang and watched Suta as she fashioned a new and wonderful bowl with the figures of a flock of goats molded about its edge. "Suta," said she at last, "I am tired of watching the field of Ulma and sometimes I forget. If I could put a hedge of thorn about it, the thorn would not forget. If Ul and Ulu were not away so much, I would ask them to do it." Suta said nothing, but Saxa saw her shoulders shake as if something pricked them, and she went away knowing that the young men of the village would know soon enough what the daughter of Om wanted.

It was a busy day at the village. One by one the young men slipped off to the hill with their sharpest knives and their oldest and toughest coats. That day the goats did not have even a chance. There was a procession of torn and tattered heroes bearing thorn bushes. The villagers came out and jeered or cheered as the mood was, and Rang superintended the work of placing the bushes. Saxa did not come out, but watched from the door of the cave, and Ulma saw that she looked more often at the road which led into the village than at the scratched and weary workers. At last Let came and stared with astonishment at the strange sight. Without stopping, however, he went off to the house of Wang, and Saxa watched to see him come and work on the thorn fence. But the hours went by and no Let appeared. One by one the others gave it up and slipped away scratched and weary

and feeling rather foolish. By nightfall only a little more than half of the field was inclosed, and both Saxa and Rang were disappointed.

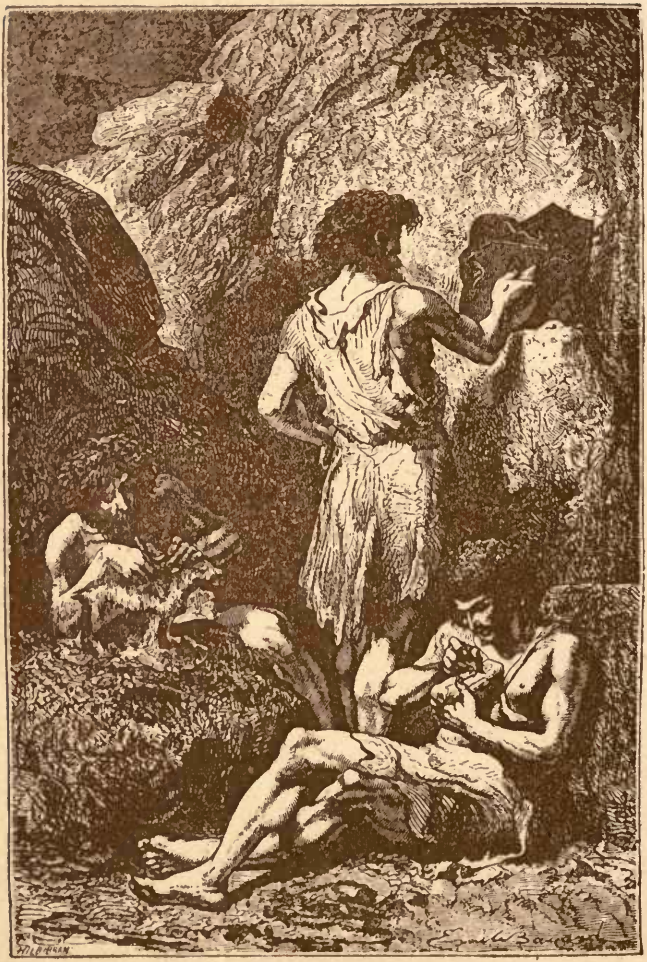
The villagers slept soundly that night, and no one was watching when the full moon rose and Let slipped out of the cave of Wang and made his way to the hill-side. He carried something that looked like a heavy sickle, made of bronze. He was dressed in the toughest kind of skins, skins prepared to act as a kind of armor in attacking savage beasts. Even his hands and feet were covered. Silently but swiftly he cut great piles of thorn bush. Then he took a rope of rawhide and bound them together and dragged them to the field. By morning the field was all inclosed with a hedge of thorns, and Let was back in the house of Wang, but not before he had left at the hut of Om a wild rose tied to a thorn bush with a slender piece of rawhide.

When Saxa looked out, she rubbed her eyes and looked again. The field was hedged on all sides with prickly thorns. Some goats were already sniffing disgustedly at the bristling fence. She looked at her feet and saw the rose and the thorn bush tied together. No one would do that but Let, and he had not come out yesterday. While she was puzzling over it, Let himself came by and waved his hand to her. To have done more would have been contrary to the custom of the tribe. She saw no sign of thorn scratches on his hands or limbs. It could not be he that had built the hedge during

the night, but some one had. Who was it? She went out to the field and walked about the hedge. At last she found the clue which she had been looking for. Let had forgotten his big bronze hook, and it lay just as he had dropped it after his last load. With a flush like the dawn she picked it up and put it under her loose tunic so that no one should see it, and carried it to the hut. She hid it behind her bed of boughs and moss, but the sharp eyes of Ulma soon discovered it, and said to Om, "Saxa shall be wife to Let, the son of Sut." "Why," answered Om, "she is but a child, and besides — " But Ulma turned away with a look of superior wisdom which made him feel much as he had done when Rang had treed him, and he said nothing.

So Ulma's wheat field grew, and many kinds of growing things were added to it. Others did likewise and food became more plentiful. In this manner Ulma became the first farmer and Saxa the first diplomatist — But no, diplomacy began with Eve.

LET, THE FIRST ARTIST



XI. LET, THE FIRST ARTIST

IN the good old days — which were not so good, after all, though they had their good points — young people were not allowed to see much of each other. At first the young men carried off the young women, if they were strong enough and the young women not too unwilling. But as time went on it became the custom for the mothers, and perhaps a little later for the fathers, to arrange such matters. There would be plenty of time, they said, for the boy and girl to get acquainted when they lived together every day. So Let could look upon Saxa only as he passed her home, and sometimes it seemed to him as if she did not see him at all. As a matter of fact, Let never put foot in the village of Angwang without Saxa's knowing it, though no one suspected it but Ulma.

Now Let was young and had not yet showed skill as a hunter. Om shook his head when the young man passed, and said, "Let him prove himself." And yet his heart was warm to the young man because he was the son of Sut. Ulma, too, was anxious. Let's face was always like the morning, and as he went through the woods he often sang to himself, and his voice made those who heard

turn to listen. It made Saxa's heart burn; but the song scared away the game.

And Let was interested in so many things besides the getting of food. One day a hunter found him seated within easy shot of a deer. His bow lay on the ground beside him. On his lap was a flat white stone, and he was marking on it with a piece of charcoal. As the deer fled at the approach of the hunter, Let looked up and shouted, "I have him." "You mean you have lost him," grumbled the hunter. But Let cared not. He had drawn the shape of the deer on the stone with his charcoal. Later, he would follow the tracing with a flint pick. So Let went home with an empty stomach but joy in his heart. Both the people of his own village and those of Angwang shook their heads, and when the men went to hunt they left Let behind. No one understood him but Suta, and so it came about that he spent most of his time at the hut of Wang. And sometimes Wang grumbled and said that the young man ate much and brought little. Then Suta turned on him as she rarely did and said, "Whose work brings food to the home of Wang?" And Wang could think of nothing to say at the time, though he thought of many things afterwards.

Suta taught Let all that she knew of the art of molding clay into wonderful shapes. But Let was not satisfied. With his charcoal crayons he made pictures on stones, clay, and skins, and Suta looked on with shining eyes. The Great Seer had given the boy the seeing eye and a hand that could speak

a new language. But Let longed to have some one else see and like the things which he made.

One day he discovered a beautiful spot in the woods where Saxa went to dream, for girls have always had their dreams from the beginning. And he took a wonderful picture of a deer which he had scratched upon a piece of slate and left it where Saxa's eye would be sure to fall upon it. The next day when he looked for it, it was gone, and he put still another picture in its place. This time it was done in soft clay with a sharp stick and then baked. It was the picture of a girl. Saxa wondered if she really looked like the picture, and studied her face, mirrored in a still pool, to make sure.

At last Saxa grew tired of having Let do all the picture talking, and Let found one day a piece of the bark of the white birch, and on it was the picture of a young man holding in his hand not a spear but a piece of charcoal, and he was drawing a deer, not killing it. So day by day they learned to talk the picture language and share each other's dreams and became very dear to each other. But, alas, the hut of Let was still unbuilt, and the men of the tribe turned their back on him at the council. If it had not been for Suta, he would often have gone hungry.

Sometimes Saxa herself grew impatient and wished he was more like other men — like her father Om, or even her brothers — but when she went to the little cave on the hill-side, which no one knew of, and looked at the wonderful things

which Let had pictured, she was glad that he was different. Suta was right. There were other things besides food and huts and clothes, and she waited patiently.

But Let was soon to enter into his man-right and take his place in the circle about the fire, and this is the story.

For many years the village of Angwang had grown and prospered. There was food for all, and warmth and shelter, and no enemies had attacked them. To many of the young people the slaughter of the red men was simply an old man's tale. But at last the peace of the village was rudely broken. A small band of hunters, of whom Let happened to be one, went up the river a little farther than usual. They expected to be back in two days at the outside. Three days went by, and nothing was heard from them. But since the men often remained away longer than they expected, little anxiety was felt for them, save in one heart — Saxa was anxious. She was sure Let would not have stayed away if something had not happened. She went many times during the third day to the spot where he left his picture messages, but found nothing. As the day went on, the grip of fear was stronger upon her, and her mother could not keep her at home. She wandered up and down the approaches of the village, trying at first to conceal her anxiety, but growing less and less careful as night approached.

Just as the night was shutting in, she stood on the bank of the river watching the path that fol-

lowed it for a considerable distance. Suddenly her attention was attracted to a piece of the bark of the silver birch drifting down the stream. Her heart leaped as she saw it. Sometimes Let had playfully sent picture messages in little boats fashioned from bark. She waded out into the stream, caught the bark as it drifted by, and hurried to the shore. Even in the dim light she could see that there were rough pictures upon it, so much rougher than any Let had ever sent before that she realized that this was something more than a love letter drawn at leisure.

With quick footsteps she hurried to the fire where her mother was cooking and studied the pictures on the bark. It needed the intuition of woman's love to interpret them. They had been scratched with something sharp, perhaps an arrow point, and not drawn with charcoal as usual. That showed that the one who had made them had expected to send it by water. The rough work showed that it had been done in haste and perhaps in danger.

As Saxa sat crouching before the fire trying to interpret the pictures, both Om and Ulma came and looked over her shoulder, but she was so intent that she did not notice them. Ulma was quite sure that the scratches meant nothing, but Om's eye was attracted by something familiar. He leaned over Saxa's shoulder and studied the bark drawing more carefully. There was the outline of a ragged hill which he had often seen in his hunting trips, and

he pointed his finger to it, saying, "Hill of the Goats!" It gave to Saxa the key she needed. She sprang to her feet and drew her father's head down so that he could see more plainly. Then she pointed with eager fingers. Here were six small figures like men, huddled together in a hollow between two cliffs. On the cliffs were as many figures as the artist could find room for, but evidently drawn with greatest haste and under great difficulties. In a corner, beneath the larger picture, was a sketch of a man creeping on all fours carrying something, it might be a piece of bark, in his teeth. In the opposite corner was Let's sign, a hand posed to draw.

The meaning was clear. The hunters had been trapped in a pass near the Hill of the Goats by a numerous enemy. Let had crept to the river to carry his bark message for help. Neither the river nor his sweetheart had failed him. Almost before Saxa had finished interpreting it Om had seized his weapons and rushed into the street of the village, giving the weird war-cry of the Angwangs which had not been heard for many years. In less time than it takes to tell, the fighting men of the tribe gathered and started to the rescue of the besieged hunters. Saxa, with throbbing heart and eyes that burned like fire, sat through the long sleepless night, watching as if her eyes could pierce the dark distance which separated her from her lover. And that night Saxa floated out of the brook of girlhood, far out into the stream of womanhood.

In the quiet life of the village Om had sometimes grown weary of inaction. He had no fondness for herding goats or digging in the soil. That was woman's work, and the hunting was not what it had been when he was young. The bullocks had gone to safer pastures. Ever the great cave bear found it safer to find a den farther and farther from the village. There had been less and less to show the real power of Om, and some of the younger men had begun to wonder if he really was so great a war-chief as the old men believed. But that night they felt the power of a born leader of men. Though his eyes burned with the light of battle and his great body seemed tense like that of a lion about to spring upon its prey, he was still so clearly ruler of himself that they all knew in him their master. He was the head; they the hands and feet.

All night they trailed in single file, as swiftly as wolves and as noiselessly as foxes. Before the gray of morning they were near the pass. Om halted his men long enough for them to rest and eat, for he knew that hungry men are always less courageous than those well fed, and he knew also that it is in the chill of morning that man's strength is at the ebb. So he gave his commands. The men were to form a great circle about the besiegers and at a signal, the weird hoot of the great white owl, rush in on the enemy, who would be too dazed to know whether a hundred men or a thousand were attacking them. For nearly half an hour not a

sound was to be heard but the occasional sleepy call of a sentinel on the cliff. Then came the long soul-searching cry of the owl, echoing through the woods, and then such blood-curdling yells and cries as torture the memory of the man who has heard them.

The red men who had ventured once more from their eastern haunts on a foraging expedition were caught napping. They had slept little for several nights. The handful of hunters were not numerous enough to cause them much anxiety, so they had set a few men to watch and given themselves up to the Sleep Spirit. When the white men rushed upon them, many of them were far off in the land of dreams and the journey back was too long for them. A few made a feeble attempt to defend themselves, but the terror of the darkness was upon them, and the chill of the morning robbed them of courage. Only a few of them escaped, and most of them were hunted down in the woods in the days that followed.

With the morning light, Om and his men stood upon the edge of the cliff and looked down upon the besieged. At a glance they could see why the red men had not rushed in and made an end of them. In the middle of the small valley, in a little open meadow, was a heap of stones, large enough to shield the hunters from the arrows of their enemies, with no cover on any side for an attacking party. A number of dead bodies in the open showed how the red men had learned their lesson. The body of one lay quite near the stone shelter and

was so pierced with arrows that it looked like a porcupine.

At a shout from the cliffs, the besieged hunters cautiously raised their heads and saw their fellow tribesmen lining the cliff which had been crowded with cruel red faces the night before. With a great shout they rushed, not towards their rescuers but to the river, where they plunged in and drank like thirsty animals, for they had been for more than two days and nights without water.

When the rescuers and rescued at last met and the story was told, Let was its hero. If it had not been for him, there would have been no one left to tell the story. They had been resting after an unsuccessful hunt, not far from the rock fort in which they had taken refuge later, when the red men attacked them. As it happened, Let was trying to draw the outline of the Hill of the Goats on a piece of bark when he saw the red men approaching and gave warning. Without the warning the hunters would have had no chance. It was Let also who had crawled to the river with his bark message, under shelter of darkness, and then come back to his companions when he might have tried to escape by the river. In fact, it was as he was returning that he had been discovered and wounded.

After the men had fed and rested, they made a litter of fir boughs and tenderly placed the wounded Let upon it and bore him back in triumph to the village. Long before the main body arrived, mes-

sengers had carried the news, and as they entered the village the street was lined with eager women and children and old people. When the litter appeared, with Om walking a few feet in advance, they raised a great shout: "Om! Om! Slayer of the red men!" There was a moment's silence and then another shout: "Let of the talking hand and the brave heart, maker of pictures!" At the shouting Let raised his head with difficulty and looked, not at the shouting crowd, but at Saxa's face as she came to meet him with a light more beautiful than that of morning in her eyes.

And Om took Let to his own cave, and Ulma put healing herbs on his wound, and Saxa fed him, as a bird mother feeds her young, till his strength came back.

At the great fire Let of the thinking hand came into his man-right and sat among the men of the tribe. And so Let became the first artist, and men loved him because he was loved of Odin.

SAX, THE FIRST MUSICIAN

XII. SAX, THE FIRST MUSICIAN

EVEN in the boyhood of Ang the oldest could not say who was the first singer. When Ang was old and wise and had seen many things and pondered on them, he told the children, as they came to him to hear of times long gone, that singing began with man and Ad sang to Eva as the thrush sings to his mate. But music was born in the village of Angwang, and Sax, son of Saxa and Let, was the first musician, and this is the story of how the Great One gave him the power to make the reeds sing.

Now Let became the husband of Saxa, and the men of the village of Angwang made a cave home for them almost as large and fine as that of Om the chief, for they all loved him for his smiling face, joyous voice, and brave heart, and reverenced him because the Great One had given him the power to make the charred wood and sharp flint speak. Next to Ang, the aged priest, and Om, the great war-chief, he was most honored.

And Let did more than make pictures on clay, stone, bark, and the skin of animals. With great care he made better pictures for words which even the children could learn to read and write. So it

came to be that men who went on long journeys could send back messages to those at home on bits of bark or wood. Children came to the cave of Let, and he showed them how to use the charcoal and pick, how to picture the things which they saw and to make signs to stand for pictures. They came so early and stayed so long that Saxa had to drive them away sometimes, and the old people grumbled because the young people liked to make pictures so much better than to tend goats or bring wood.

There came to the cave of Saxa and Let from the land of the little folk, which is near the dwelling of Odin and Freya, a son, and they called him Sax. As he grew to be a man, there was no one like him in all the village. He was big like his grandfather Om; he had the cunning hand of his father Let and he was a dreamer of dreams like his mother Saxa. The Great Spirit had given him all the gifts but one. His voice was hoarse like the raven's, and yet the spirit of song was in him and he tried again and again to sing, but even the boys who loved him and the girls who admired him could not hide their laughter.

Sax could do everything except sing, and that was the thing which he most longed to be able to do. He went far away into the woods, where no one would hear him, and tried to bring music to his tongue, but it was useless. Sax's ear was good, though his voice was poor, and he finally gave it up; but still the spirit of song within him called.

And the time came when the call became so loud that he could not escape from it day or night.

In the village of Sutlack on the plains there was a girl whose name was Lala, and she sang so that the birds would stop to listen and men's hearts kept time to the pulsing of her song. As Sax heard her, it seemed as if his heart would burst with its longing to pour out its own love in an answering song. Once a hoarse note escaped him, but the look on Lala's startled face stopped all its fellows in his throat and he never tried to sing again. But the love of Sax for Lala grew, and he could find no language for it which would reach the heart of the girl. With the intuition of a lover, he knew that melody was the only path to the heart of Lala — and he was dumb. He brought the finest of game and the choicest of fruits and nuts and left them at the cave of Lack, her grandfather, but she gave no sign. While she looked on, he excelled all the young men of the tribe in running and wrestling and shooting, but she listened to the song of the birds and cared nothing for his strength and skill. There was not a girl in the village of Angwang or the village of Sutlack who would not have been glad to share the cave of Sax, except Lala, and Sax cared only for her.

Now Ang had gone his way to the land of the fathers, but Oma lingered. She was almost blind and had to be carried to the council fire of her people. But as the outer eye grew dim the inner eye grew bright, and there was no one in the north

land who was so wise as Oma. She was wise with the wisdom of the fathers. In the long years of her journey in the land of Now she had seen and heard many things and learned their meaning, but more than these the Wise One had given her the power to read the heart as Om had read the woods and the streams. And Sax came to Oma and told her his trouble. The old woman listened in silence and made no answer for so long that Sax thought she had not heard and began to tell his story again. Then Oma roused herself as from a dream: "No, I heard thee. My spirit has been living again the days that are gone. I have been hearing again the spring song of Ang, and my heart has been again the heart of a girl. There is no road to the heart of Lala but that of song, and the Great One has not given thee the singing tongue."

The heart of Sax sank within his breast, and he sat long in silence with his head bowed. Then he turned again to the old woman: "Is there no other way?" "There is none," answered Oma, and it seemed the voice of fate. "Then," said Sax, "I will find that way." As he knelt by the old woman's knee, he straightened himself and threw back his head as if challenging invisible enemies. And she laid her hand upon his head and pushed his hair back from his brow, murmuring to herself. Ang and Om and Saxa — they all lived there, and her own blood was his. Then a light came to her face: "In time of need Odin has spoken to the people.

In the cruel cold he spoke to Ang in the tongues of fire. He gave to Oma the secret of the clay. He taught Rang to make the wood and stone and copper his servants. He showed to Om the smoke trail. He made Ulu the master of the winds. He gave to Let the speaking hand. Go follow the stream as it sings its way to the Great Water and listen for the voice of the Revealer. It may be that he will show you how to follow the trail which leads to the heart of Lala."

So Sax took a skiff which he had made for himself, one lighter and swifter than any that he had made before, and followed the singing water. In the morning he heard the song of the birds. At noon he drowsed to the humming of insects. At night he listened to the music of the stream, and his soul was stored with harmony and melody, but it could find no voice.

At last he came to the Father of Waters. All day long he heard the thousand voices of the sea and sky and land mingling about him. Song, song everywhere but on the lips of Sax. Where was the Keeper of Secrets? Had he gone on a long journey? Had he forgotten? Had he no more secrets? Was it too great a task even for the Great One to give song to the one who had none? He fell into a troubled sleep upon the sand, but was awakened by a soft sweet sound at his ear, a sound which seemed to bring together all the mystic melodies of earth and air and water. He lay very still, fearing that the music would vanish like a dream of

the night, but it did not. He slowly turned his head and saw near him a great shell. Taking it in his hands, he pressed it close to his ear and listened with delight to the wonderful songs of the sea. His heart beat heavily and his breath came quickly. Perhaps the secret was hidden in the heart of the shell.

The next day he listened to the heart of many shells. He found that different shells made different sounds in different keys. But still the secret was not his. How could he make them sing his song instead of their own? He found that he could make a sound which was clear and sweet by blowing on the lips of some of them, but it takes more than one note to make music.

Day after day he wandered on the shore and tried to pluck the secret of song from the heart of the shell. He collected shells of all sizes and arranged them before him and by blowing one after another finally made a series of sounds which were something like a musical scale, but Sax knew that the songs which pressed behind his dumb lips could never find voice through such slow and uncertain sounds as these. He must search again. He lay down on the sand discouraged but not defeated. He would not go back until he had found it.

As he lay full length on the white beach looking out upon the waters and wondering if the secret lay beyond it, his hand, as it played with the sand, fell upon a dry reed which some high tide had cast above the ordinary level of the waves. He toyed with it unthinking and unseeing, little dreaming that

he held the magic wand of music within his grasp. With thoughts still trying to span the sea, he idly held the reed in his hand. It was hard as a stick, but so light that it finally drew his wandering attention. He glanced at it. It was hollow. He held it to his eye towards the light, and not being able to see through it, tried to blow out the dried pith which stuck in one end. As he did so carelessly, he blew across the open end of the reed, and was called back from the land of aimless dreams by a low, soft whistle. He blew again, and louder. Again the answering note, only clearer and stronger, a note which stirred the heart like the woodsy whistle of the thrush. He started to his feet with a cry of joy. While he looked afar, the secret lay at his feet. In his excitement he broke the fragile reed in two. With sinking heart he looked at it. Had he lost it so soon after finding it? He blew again on one of the shorter pieces. Again an answering whistle, but this time higher and more shrill.

Joy filled his heart. At last the Revealer had spoken. The reeds should give voice to the songs of his soul. With anxious care he sought for reeds of varied lengths and varied sizes in the marshes which bordered the mouth of the river. He tested each till he found what suited him; then he bound them together. It was a crude thing, and yet the soul of Sax was so full of music that he made it sing. Then he made better and better ones. At last he made one out of a kind of pith alder, which

satisfied him. He arranged its pipes so that he could sound a series of notes from low to high. Then he began to imitate upon it the song of birds and at last the songs of Lala and the songs which he had made for her and could not sing before.

As the days went by, his skill grew greater and the songs sweeter. He tired of playing to himself, the sea, and the woods. The reeds must sing to Lala. Each night as he camped by the river's bank on his home journey he taught his pipe new and more beautiful love songs.

Sax drew near to the village of Sutlack just as the sun was setting. Instead of going ashore he fastened his skiff near the hut of Lack and waited. Suddenly there came from the top of a tree just above him a song more beautiful than any he had ever heard before. It was Lala, who, like the birds, loved to sing from the upper air of the tree tops. Again and again she sang, and Sax listened in a dream of love and wonder. At last she stopped and for a moment there was silence; then there came up as if from the heart of the river such music as Lala had never heard before and never dreamed of. She listened breathlessly with heart keeping time with the melody.

Sax's soul poured out music till the valley seemed full to overflowing and spilled a stream of song over the encircling hills. The villagers listened in wonder and awe, thinking it the song of the River Spirit. Lala, after the first delight and wonder, peered down through the branches and saw Sax

and his singing pipes. As she listened, she seemed to hear the very soul of Sax finding voice, and the soul of all things, and most of all her own soul.

By and by she came down to the river's bank, and Sax found his way to the heart of Lala by the path of song, for he gave a voice and a soul to the reeds.

So Sax became the first musician and the father of those who give to nature and to man a thousand voices and enrich life with melody and harmony.

THE CALL OF THE GREAT WATER

XIII. THE CALL OF THE GREAT WATER

UL and Ulu grew to be men and mighty hunters. They had caves of their own, sat among the men of their tribe at the council fire, and had enough to eat and to wear. Many of the young men of the tribe envied them and said, "If we had as much as Ul and Ulu, we should want no more." But the young men themselves were restless and cared less and less for the ordinary life of their tribe. Day and night they heard the lap of the waves on the distant shore of the Great Water, and the unknown beyond beckoned them. They said but little to each other, but each knew that the same hidden fire of unrest burned in the heart of the other.

Often they climbed to the highest peak of the Black Hills and looked eagerly to the western sky. They built larger and larger dug-outs, felling and hollowing out the trunks of enormous trees. At last they fashioned one large enough to carry a dozen men and they fitted it with two sails, a great steering paddle, and a covered hatch in front. With some other adventurous men of their own age they followed the stream to the sea and spent weeks

feasting on the sea food, taking short voyages to test their boat, yielding more and more to the magnetic pull of the West, and — the Mystery beyond. A few experiments convinced Ulu, who was by common consent master sailor, that their boat, large as it seemed on the river, was not large enough for the Great Water. It was long and narrow, without a keel, and it rolled and tipped dangerously, even in a moderate sea. When they headed it into waves of any size, the water would come over the low bow and swamp it. Again and again they had to swim ashore, pushing their waterlogged craft before them.

Instead of going back to the village of Angwang as they had done before, Ul and Ulu and their companions found a sheltered cave not far from the mouth of the river and built huts for themselves and laid the foundations of a village. Food was plenty, and they gave themselves to learning the ways of the sea. Ulu undertook the problem of making a bigger boat. No tree trunk was large enough, so they fastened two great trunks together with great wooden pins, laboriously boring holes with a sand drill, an invention of Rang's. It took them months to finish the big dug-out, and when it was finished it was little, if any, better than those made of a single tree trunk.

Ul shook his head, saying it could not be done, and the others agreed, excepting Ulu. While the others gave themselves up to fishing and hunting, he went off by himself. If old Rang had been with

them, he would have said, as he had said so often when they were boys, "When the thing is too big, think." So he thought and thought and thought again. He made little models of boats of various shapes, from soft wood, and floated them on the bay to see how they would take the smaller waves, but all, as it seemed, to no purpose. His companions would often point their hands to their heads with sober nods, when his back was turned.

One day, when a stiff breeze was blowing, Ul and two of his companions went out in the old dug-out, but Ulu stayed on the shore, thinking, and watching his toy boats. Soon he noticed that the men in the boat were having bad weather. Though the waves were not very high, they were sharp and crested and each wave spilled over the bow. In a few moments Ul gave it up and brought the boat back to the beach nearly filled with water. Ulu shook his head. That kind of a boat would not do. Just then his attention was called to a wild duck sitting easily on the tossing water. There was the model for his sea boat. It must be broader, and the bow must be high enough to throw back the water, and it must be lighter, so that it could rise quickly to meet the waves. But how could it be done? Ulu longed for the cunning hands and contriving brain of Rang, but Rang was far away and Rang was old. If it was to be done, *he* was to do it, so he gave himself again to his task. He made models following the lines of the duck and found

that they were steadier and better. But the problem was to make one large enough and light enough. It could not be made by hollowing logs. There must be some other way.

One day, as he wandered upon the beach in deep discouragement and all but ready to give it up and go back to the village and live as his fathers had done before him, he came upon the carcase of a porpoise which had been tossed up by the waves. Gulls and vultures had picked away all the flesh, leaving only the tough skin and bones. The birds had been able to get at the flesh only through the softer skin of the upturned belly, so the skin on the sides and back was unbroken. He pushed it into the water with his foot, where it floated as lightly as a hollow tree. A gust of wind caught it and it sailed swiftly from him. With a cry Ulu dashed after it into the water and caught it with great difficulty. Perhaps here was the secret. He dragged it above the reach of the waves and studied it. The bones made a light framework; the dried skin a perfect covering.

For weeks Ulu and Ul and their companions labored at a new type of boat. First they made a framework of ash, like the skeleton of the fish model. Then they covered it with skins collected with great care and sewed together with sinews. Finally they covered it with pitch to keep out the water and protect the skins. When it was finished, it did not look very well, but it was, after all, a better sea boat than the narrow rolling dug-out.

It was light and elastic, but with considerable strength and carrying power.

After a few trial trips to test its sea-going qualities, Ulu and his companions fitted it for a longer voyage than they had ever attempted before. They filled goatskins with water and stored dried venison and wheat flour under a rude hatch in front. The other men expected to take a trip up the shore, but not out of sight of land, but Ulu and Ul had hearts set on the Great Beyond and eyes searching the far horizon.

They set sail on a beautiful spring morning. The blue of the sea answered the blue of the sky. A soft land breeze pushed them gently seaward. The sun was rising from great white pillows of cloud. Never had there been a fairer morning than this on which these pioneer voyagers set sail. The spirits of the men were in tune with the brightness of the day. A new world beckoned to them with smiles, as a mother beckons to her child. So they sailed and sailed with their faces towards the west and with a following wind. Not even the most timid thought to look back. Ulu and Ul would not. Finally the eastern shore sank back lower and lower, and to east and west and north and south there was nothing but water as far as the eye could see.

As midday approached, it grew hotter and the breeze died away. When the weary men dropped their paddles and reached for water, one looked about him and gave a startled cry. Where the friendly and familiar shore had been, was only the

bluish smoke line of the horizon. For a few moments not a word was spoken. The breeze had gone. There was not a sound but the sluggish lapping of the waves on the boat's side and the occasional call of a gull as he swooped in wide circles about this strange new fish which only swam on the surface of the water. They were all brave men in an age when only the brave could live, but as they looked stealthily into each other's faces they saw the lurking shadows of fear. They had been lonely before, but never with a loneliness like this. There was not the comfort of a single familiar landmark. In the blue haze of the midday there was a strange look in each face. When one spoke, he seemed startled at the sound of his own voice and did not speak again.

Ulu alone did not seem moved by the strange new isolation of mid-sea. Ul looked at him questioningly, but his gaze did not waver from the western horizon. It was as if he saw something beyond their vision which held him by its magic spell as the serpent holds the charmed bird. The men whispered to each other and started guiltily at their rough breathing. The heat was great and the men were wet with sweat, but they shivered now and then. When Ulu, as if waking from a trance, gave the signal to go on, they paddled feverishly, glad of the diversion of occupation. They wished that he would turn the bow of the boat to the east, but there was something in the faces of the brothers which kept them silent as the boat headed always west.

As for Ulu, he thought of nothing but the something just beyond the horizon, and Ul studied nothing but the face of his brother. Only the brain of Ulu and the favor of Odin could save them from — he knew not what. Still Ulu gave no sign. If he had been wiser in the ways of the sea, he would have known that deadly danger lurked in the sky above them and in the water about them. The wind ceased entirely. A fog slowly rose and enveloped them, but so gradually they could not tell when it came. The water about them changed from purple to an oily black, and at last the gray blanket hid even that. Ulu, as he sat at the stern, grew dimmer and dimmer till the man who sat next him reached out his hand and touched him to be sure he was there. The men stopped paddling and listened, breathless. In the great silence even the dripping of their paddles startled them. What next?

Now that the western horizon had been hidden from him, Ulu seemed to waken as from a dream. For the first time he felt the grip of fear on his own heart. Perhaps the spirits of the Beyond did not love men and had sent this great mist to blind prying eyes. But what could he do? He could not tell the sun rising from the sun setting when he could hardly see his hand before his face. For the first time he realized what it would mean if he had been wrong and had gone against the will of the Great Ones. These men, his companions, would pay the penalty of his folly.

As he sat with head bowed on his breast, a breath of cool air touched his face. There was a rustling in the air above them. The mantle of mist lifted; the black water appeared again, and at last the wide expanse of the sea, but a very different sea. It looked like the face of a swarthy giant just breaking into uncontrollable rage. It did not need the skilled eye of a seaman to see that worse was coming, and it came with terrible rapidity. About them the sea was black. To the southeast there appeared a gray blue streak of rumpled water that rushed towards them with an ominous whistling sound, like that of wind in the tree tops; a gust smote them on the quarter, and their frail bark rocked dangerously; then the storm closed in upon them. Gray wolf waves rushed at them, and the salt foam from their hungry jaws flicked the faces of the frightened men. Above them the huntsmen of the air swept by with awful roar, hurling their bolts of fire. The wind lashed them and slashed them and tossed them. Following a blind instinct rather than reason, Ulu kept his men paddling steadily against the wind. Sometimes green water came over the gunwale and two men had to bail for life. A hundred times it seemed as if the end had come, and the men would have dropped their paddles if it had not been for Ulu. With the danger his courage grew. The storm was not so terrifying as the gray stillness which had come before it.

And at last they outrode the storm, and when the clouds parted and the wind had gone roaring

back to its northern dens and the sea grew more quiet, the sun looked down on one of the strangest crews that ever sailed the sea. The boat had been badly strained in the storm and leaked so fast that half of the men had to bail in order to keep it afloat. Water still trickled from their matted hair, down their streaming backs. In the eyes of the men was the wild look often seen in the faces of those who have been almost drowned. But in Ulu's face shone the light of conquest. The black ones had fled and they were still alive. "Look," cried he, pointing to the northwest, "they have gone. We are here. The land of the sun-setting calls us."

The western horizon, cleared by the storm, was now clearly marked by a land line which grew thicker and thicker as they paddled towards it. Just at sunset they came to a low-lying coast wooded to the very shores and dragged their boat on the beach. It was fortunate that they had reached land when they did, for the boat would have floated only a few hundred yards more.

Weary and exhausted, they made no other preparations for the night than to eat some of the water-soaked provisions and dig a hole for a bed in the warm sand. Through the first part of the night they all slept the sleep of utter exhaustion, but as the chill mist of morning settled on shore and sea Ulu awoke. He tried again and again to go to sleep, but failed. When the light began to break, he arose and decided to spy out this new land before his companions awoke.

As he climbed a low bluff above the beach where his companions slept, the day was breaking. All about him was apparently trackless forest. It was useless to try exploring it alone. He turned and looked down on his companions, who looked like driftwood on the shore, and out upon the sea which they had crossed with such danger. His heart sank within him as he thought of the distance which separated them from the old familiar scenes. Was this the land which had so long lured him in his dreams? Trees, trees everywhere. They did not need to cross the great water and risk their lives to find trees.

He was startled from his melancholy musing by a sound like the call of a wood pigeon, and turned to see a woman standing within a few yards of him. Her hands were extended toward him with open palms, a sign of peace as old as the human race, and yet there was something in her appearance more terrifying than an armed man. Her long hair, which hung in heavy masses on her shoulders, was red — the red that glows like an ember in the fire and glistens like burnished bronze in the sun. Her face showed, even in the dim morning light, the plentiful kisses of the sun. Her body was more powerful than that of any woman whom Ulu had ever seen, but still had grace and beauty. She was young, younger than Ulu, and, as he thought, the most wonderful and beautiful woman he had ever seen, and yet there was something about her to bring fear to the heart of even a brave man. The some-

thing was in her eyes, which were the gray blue of the veldt, and in the expression of her face. Her eyes seemed to look through Ulu and beyond; they pierced him like arrows; they cut him like knives, and yet it seemed as if she saw not him but something in him or behind him. Her face had the texture of a child's, but the look of one who has seen nothing but bloodshed and cruelty for twice a lifetime, a face terrifying because of its mingling of age with youth and grimness with beauty.

Though she said not a word and only looked fixedly at him, Ulu knew that she was one of those whose spirits had wandered from their bodies, driven out perhaps by some horror of fear or suffering. Under the woman's look, Ulu's dread and uncertainty grew, and he tried to slip away to his companions. He had taken only a step or two, however, when he was stopped by the pressure of a hand on his shoulder. The touch was light as that of Ulma, but the hand of the giant Om could not have stopped him more quickly. He was more terrified than he had ever been in his life before, but he was as helpless to resist as a child in the hands of its mother.

Without speaking or looking at him, she gazed at his companions on the shore for a time. Then she turned and, taking his hand in hers, led him by a narrow path into the woods. Fearful and reluctant as he was, he followed her ~~as~~ unquestioningly as one in a hypnotic trance. For the time he had no will but that of the mysterious woman.

Silently but swiftly she led him by a tortuous trail into the heart of the forest where the shadows of night still lingered. At last they drew near a clearing, as Ulu could tell by the growing light, and the woman left the beaten path, leading him stealthily to a screen of bushes from which they could see across an open space.

It was a weird spectacle on which Ulu looked out. In the center of the open spot, which was shaped like a small amphitheater, was a stone altar, made by placing a large flat rock on four supporting stones. On the top of it lay the naked body of a child, whose beauty could be seen even in the dim light. His hands and feet were bound fast, and his head rested on a kind of stone pillow, and his hair was the color of the sun, like that of the woman who stood by his side.

In a circle about the altar were crouched twenty or thirty men, black-haired and swarthy, evidently waiting with grim patience for some appointed time. At the head of the altar, and facing the east, stood an old man of striking and terrifying appearance. He was taller than any man Ulu had ever seen, and a great white beard fell below his waist. In his uplifted right hand he held a great stone knife, which he waved above the child's head, while he chanted a weird song with a refrain in which the watchers joined. When the knife came near the child's throat, the grip of the woman on Ulu's arm seemed to cut into his flesh.

The scene needed no interpreter. The old man

was a priest of the sun; the child with the flaming red hair was to be sacrificed to him as he rose above the circle of trees. At the sight the trance into which Ulu had been thrown by the strange woman lifted, as the mist had risen from the sea the day before. The red blood surged from heart to brain. A man's courage came back to him. These were men, not spirits, but men more cruel than the red men whom Om and his people had slaughtered. The fighting spirit of his fathers rose in his breast, but it was to be guided by the brain of Ulu the cunning.

The woman had sunk at his feet as one dead, all her strange power gone. He looked toward the east. There was an hour before sunrise. The child should not be sacrificed to the sun. Leaving the woman huddled on the ground, he turned and swiftly followed the path back to the shore. His companions were just rousing when he reached them. He told his story as they were devouring the remains of their provisions. They needed no urging. The giant Ul shook his great head and shoulders like a bull about to charge. This was his element, and he took command as naturally on land as Ulu did on the sea.

After hiding their boat they swiftly followed Ulu. Each carried a bronze axe, short sword, and spear.

They went so swiftly that they reached the clearing in the wood before the sun had risen above the tree tops. They came so quietly that the

watchers about the altar did not suspect their presence. The woman was still huddled upon the ground, with her face buried in her hands. The aged priest still stood at the head of the altar, knife in hand, waiting for the first rays of the rising sun to touch the head of the victim. The look of the priest and of the men who crouched about him was enough to bring terror even to a brave heart. The Angwangs were outnumbered two to one, but there was no fear in the breast of Ul or his companions.

As stealthily as the great cats of their native woods, they crept to the shelter of a clump of bushes just behind the priest. The Kelts faced the east and were watching intently the slow rising of the sun over the tree tops. A yellow shaft shot through the trees above their head, still another and another, till the trunks above their heads were gilded. The priest raised his knife with a frenzied gesture and began to chant the death song, in which the others joined with savage zest.

Just as the cruel knife was descending on the throat of the doomed child, the spear of Ul, hurled with terrific force, pierced the back of the priest, its sharp point protruding from his breast. For a moment he stood upright, his knife still raised. A stream of red blood stained his white beard. The cruel blood lust in his face changed to one of anguish and amazement, and he fell face down upon the altar, bathing the child with his blood.

The Kelts were brave, but they were over-

whelmed by the suddenness of the attack. In preparation for the sacrifice they had fasted two days, expecting to gorge themselves at the sacrificial feast. Their rude stone weapons were no match for the bronze weapons of the Saxons. And these yellow-haired furies filled them with a superstitious dread. Perhaps these were the people of the sun, who was angry with them. A few escaped, but most of them shared the fate of their priest.

When the slaughter was over, they turned to the altar. The woman had already reached it and unbound her child. As she knelt upon the blood-soaked stone with her child hugged to her breast, the full light of the summer sun streamed down upon them, crowning the head of the mother and child with gold, and giving a ruddier tint to the blood stains.

With a tenderness surprising in such a man, Ul led the woman with her child to the shelter of the trees. Then they piled the bodies of the slain upon the altar. With a grim humor they placed the body of the Druid on top with his bloodless face towards the sun. Then they piled dry wood about the bodies and burned them as a sacrifice to the sun.

Near by they found the bodies of two stags and preparations for a feast, and they ate with the appetites of wolves, but Ul gave meat to the woman and the child before he touched it himself.

As the woman fed the child in her arms and a smile broke on its face, the mist of madness lifted from her, and her tears rained down upon it. Ulu

looked at her curiously. She was more beautiful than he had thought, and he wondered why he had been afraid of her. He was a little disappointed that when she looked at him she showed no sign of remembering him; and he was a little disappointed that she followed Ul as if she had always belonged to him, when they returned to the shore. But when he saw Ul take up the child and carry it, he consoled himself with the thought that it was better not to have a woman and child if one always heard the call of the sea and had to spend much time in thinking. Then the woman's hair was very red, though it might be beautiful in a way, and if she should ever get angry — why, it was just as well that big Ul should have her, yes, very much better.

Gradually they explored the country about them. They found a place suitable for a settlement on the bank of a river. Occasionally they came upon small villages of Kelts with black hair and blue eyes, but only rarely did the villagers show any desire to fight. The fear of the yellow-haired men was upon them. As time went on, they became friends, and the Saxons took wives from among the Kelts. On the banks of the Tham grew up a village where Ul became a great chief, and sons and daughters with gold red hair grew up about him and a new race was born in the new land.

But Ulu heard always the voice of the sea. He made bigger and bigger boats, covering them at last with strips of wood in place of skins, and he took longer and longer voyages, with those who, like

himself, loved the toss of the waves beneath them and were never happy except when steering where men had never been before.

So Ulu became a seaman, and Ul a pioneer and founder of a race in a new land, and it was so because the Great One willed it.

THE STORY OF LUP

XIV. THE STORY OF LUP

THERE grew up in the village of Angwang a boy whose name was Jut. His parents had never done anything to make their names remembered, so they were soon forgotten. They died when Jut was a small boy, and no one knew just how he had been able to keep alive. Some of the women gave him scraps to eat when there was anything left from their own meals. The men paid little attention to him, and bigger and better-fed boys treated him with the unthinking cruelty of young animals. They jeered at him because he was small and mocked his lameness, for one of his legs was shorter than the other. They would not let him join with them in games which he could play. He could not keep up with them on their hunting trips, even if they had been willing to have him go. Some of the village bullies would throw stones at him to see him hobble away.

So it was that Jut lived a very hard life and came more and more to creep off by himself. He was that saddest of all creatures, a boy without a friend, if we except Saxa, who had often given him food and shelter. Very early he learned to set

traps such as the hunters of the village made, and he became so deft in making them and so cunning in setting them that he went hungry less and less often, and sometimes had a wood hen or a young fawn to leave at the hut of Saxa. With more and better food he became stronger, and finally, when a big boy who had tormented him for years came nearer than usual, he was surprised to be caught in a grip like that of a young cave bear, and when he finally got free and could run out of Jut's reach, he had such a pulpy and battered look that his own mother did not know him. After that Jut was treated with more respect, but not with more affection. He grew more and more bitter, more and more lonely. If it had not been for the kind Saxa, no tie would have held him to the village. As it was, he left the village for long periods, but no one noticed his going or his coming. When the villagers thought of him, which was not often, they said, "He is an ugly boy and likes to be by himself." But all the time Jut was starving for comradeship, and he still haunted the village in the hope that he might pick up some crumbs of friendship.

At last, when he was almost a man, he went off, planning never to return. He took all his possessions, and they made a very small load. There were his weapons, a skin which served as a pouch by day and a blanket at night, and a rude clay dish given him by little Senna, the granddaughter of Suta, which he cherished more than his best bow,

because it was the only thing which had ever been given to him. It was merely a child's plaything; he could have made a much better one for himself, but he guarded it with jealous care and would use nothing else. He told himself bitterly that if Senna had been as old as the girls who laughed at him because he was lame and avoided him, she would not have given it to him; and still he cared for it.

For days he traveled northward, following the winding river till it became a brook. He went slowly, for he was lame and his leg pained him much. Often he halted, half minded to go back, but what was the use? The thing he sought was not there.

One night, as he lay brooding in lonely misery by the fire, which he had to keep constantly alight to drive away dangerous prowlers, he heard a low, whining bark, so low that he thought for a while it was far, far away. Then he became curious and sat up to listen more carefully. No, it was close by. He got up and carefully followed the sound, firmly grasping his stone axe in his hands. In a few paces he came upon a little wolf cub which had been terribly mauled by some animal, perhaps a wild-cat. One of its hind legs was helpless and trailed after him, and it was too weak to get away, even from the lame boy. If Jut had not been so lonely, he would have killed the wolf cub without a thought. Or it may be that the helpless leg of the little beast appealed to some hidden spring of sympathy. At any rate, he picked up the cub, care-

fully avoiding its sharp teeth, and took him back to the fire.

At first the little wolf struggled feebly to get away from the terrifying glow, but Jut held him where the warmth reached him and he became more quiet. Then, seeing that the creature was almost starved, he gave him something to eat. Even in his frenzy of hunger the wolf watched the man cub with curious eyes, expecting to have the food snatched from him as his brother had done in the den, when his mother had brought them food. But Jut did not do it. When he had eaten his fill, the cub grew very sleepy and the fire was very warm, and Jut's side was a very cosy place to nestle against. So the lonely wolf cub and the lonely man cub curled up by the fire, and each was less lonely because of the other.

The next morning Jut fed the wolf again and carefully bound up the crippled leg, talking to him all the time as if he could understand. Little by little the wolf found that the boy's hand was always kind and that it gave food. Even though his leg ached and his wounds were painful, his stomach was full and he was warm, and perhaps he was more comfortable than he had ever been in his short life before.

For several days Jut did not change his camp, and the pup grew strong with astonishing rapidity. One night he chewed off the strips of hide which bound his leg and the next morning he walked on all fours. Jut lay watching him, expecting him to

run off into the woods any moment. Sometimes he would run away to the stream for a drink or to investigate some new noise, but each time he came back and crouched on his haunches, watching his new friend. Evidently he preferred him to the pack with which he had had to fight for every morsel of food. That day Jut went on, and Lup followed, at first limping like his new master, but soon circling about him, going five miles to his one. But he rarely wandered beyond the call of Jut; when he did, his sharp nose had no difficulty in picking up the pungent man-trail.

And Lup became Jut's first friend. They hunted together. Lup's nose told him where the game was, Jut's arrow brought it down, and they both shared in the kill. It was better than hunting with the pack. As they sat about the fire, Jut would talk to him as if he had been a man, and Lup liked to hear the sound of his voice and would listen with winking eye and wagging tail. And Lup learned many things by living with the man hunter. He learned to wait when he had tracked the game till his lame master could come up and shoot it. He learned to drive it where his master was waiting, to come at his master's whistle. And Jut taught him some things which he would much rather not have learned.

The partnership was good for both. They rarely went hungry. Lup was legs to Jut, and Jut was hands and brain to Lup. They both thrived. Jut found a cave overlooking a lake in a place where

the game was plentiful and made it his first home. Lup shared it with him and grew and grew until his master thought he would never stop growing. His shoulders were nearly as high as Jut's hips, and he weighed nearly as much as his master. He was larger than any wolf Jut had ever seen. Sometimes he met straggling wolves and he fought them impartially. At first he held his own; then he fought to a finish any who dared to challenge him.

One day they had been hunting a deer according to their usual fashion. Jut took his place by a runway through a gorge, and Lup chased the deer toward it. But they were not the only hunters in the field. While Jut was intently watching for the deer, a cave bear, who had his den in the gorge, waked up hungry and came out to forage. To his surprise he found game almost in front of his den. With marvelous quietness for so big a creature, he crept up behind Jut, and was within a few feet of him before he was heard. All the advantage was with the bear. He had almost cornered Jut, who was not much of a runner, and a bear, clumsy as he appears, can be wonderfully swift in his movements. Jut was already too experienced a hunter not to know that his chances of escape were few; still, with the blind instinct of self-preservation, he shot his arrow at the approaching bear and climbed the nearest tree. The arrow scarcely pricked the tough hide of the bear, who was so close to Jut that his great claw tore one

of the man's legs as he dragged himself out of reach for a moment.

The bear was prepared to climb the tree, if necessary, but he was in no hurry. He tore the trunk of the tree with his teeth, and then stretched up to his full length and scratched off great strips of bark with his cruel claws. Next he hugged the tree, which seemed smaller every moment to Jut, and shook it with terrifying fury. Finally the bear, tired of the joys of anticipation, started to climb the tree, and Jut knew that there was no hope. Just at that moment the wild hunting cry of a wolf echoed through the gorge, and a deer rushed by. It attracted the attention of the bear, who slipped down the trunk of the tree to see what was going on. For a moment the wolf and the bear confronted each other with curiosity. For ages there had been a kind of truce between the two. Neither found the other satisfactory game.

When he saw Lup, Jut gave a shrill whistle by which he was accustomed to call him, and the wolf looked up and saw his master in the tree above him. The old instinct to let the bear alone held him back; the new habit of obedience to the call of Jut pulled him forward, strengthened by the love for the man who had been his friend. The new habit and the new affection won. With a savage snarl he dashed at the bear's haunches, darting aside to avoid the terrible swing of the paw. Round and round they spun, the surprised bear growing angrier every moment. By degrees Lup

drew the bear away from the foot of the tree. As nimble as a monkey, Jut slipped down the tree and recovered his weapons which he had dropped. He could easily have escaped, leaving Lup to take his chances, but no thought of it entered his mind when he saw that the bear had driven Lup into a crevasse from which he could not escape without coming within reach of the deadly paws. Lup had stood by the man; he would stand by Lup.

Stealing up behind the bear, whose sole attention was now given to the wolf, Jut thrust his long bronze knife into his side, just behind the ribs, leaping back to avoid the swing of the maddened beast. With a roar of pain, the bear rushed at Jut. Lup slashed his quarters with his knife-like teeth. As the bear turned on the wolf, Jut struck him a terrible blow with his bronze axe, cutting a great gash in his shoulder and partly crippling him. Back and forth, round and round the strange battle waged. Sometimes the bear seemed to be getting the best of it; once Lup ventured too near, and one of the flying paws ripped his flank from shoulder to thigh. Jut also had his leg terribly torn. But it was two to one. The bear grew weak from loss of blood. More and more often the sharp axe slashed him. At last, as he reared high to plunge at Lup, Jut severed one of the great tendons in his hind leg. The bear toppled over on his side, no longer able to make his terrible rushes. Then Jut waited for his opportunity and drove his spear to the bear's heart, and the great fight was over.

After the frenzy of battle, the victors became conscious of their own wounds. Jut felt faint from loss of blood, and Lup crept up to him, whining dismally and licking his dripping flank. With the skill which men learned quickly in the time when wounds were every-day affairs, Jut dressed the wounds, taking as much care with Lup's as he did with his own, and the wolf licked the man's hand with low whines of gratitude. From that day they were blood brothers.

At the season of the year when the wolves run in pairs, Lup grew restless. Sometimes in the dead of night the strange mating call of the wolf bitch could be heard in the distance, and Lup would lift his nose high in the air and give an answering call which made the surrounding hills echo. One night he slipped away, disobeying the call of his master, and was gone for two days. Jut thought he had gone for good, and began to realize what Lup had meant to him. He was able to kill very little game alone, and he was more lonely than he had ever been in his life before.

But on the morning of the third day he heard with delight Lup's shrill bark, and the big gray wolf trotted up the path to the cave, waving his brush proudly and turning every few yards to look behind him. Jut saw nothing and eagerly called him, but Lup paid no heed and finally turned and went out of sight. Again he appeared, barking sharply, but clearly with friendly intent. This time there trotted, a few yards behind him, a wolf bitch

only a little smaller than himself. She was very suspicious and turned tail again and again and returned to the bush. But each time Lup coaxed her back until at last she came near enough for Jut to toss her an inviting bone.

By degrees she grew wonted to the man friend of Lup, and ate with them and hunted with them, but she never would sleep in the cave with the man. By and by she found a small den not far from the cave, in a spot which Jut could not reach. Then she stopped hunting, and Lup hunted for her and would even take the bones which Jut gave him to the den of his mate. After several weeks Lup and his mate came to the cave, followed by two round rolling pups. The pups were suspicious at first, but soon found the man friend very good company. He gave them even better morsels to eat than their mother, and he knew how to scratch their heads and sides in a way that felt uncommonly good.

So Lup became the friend of Jut and the father of those who in every land and age came to share man's work, his pleasure, and his pain.

THE WOOING OF SENNA

XV. THE WOOING OF SENNA

FOR a number of years Jut lived by himself, seeking no other company than that of his family of wolf dogs, and he grew to be a powerful man, even though he was lame. He had plenty to eat, and in his caves were the finest skins. No one had finer weapons than he or knew how to use them more skillfully. He was rich, according to the standards of his time, and yet he was not satisfied. Even the comradeship of Lup and his descendants did not satisfy his craving for friends. By and by the desire to see those of his own kind became so strong that he began to extend his hunting trips more and more in the direction of Angwang. Sometimes he caught a glimpse of the villagers from some hilltop. The villagers soon found traces of the hunting of Jut and his four-footed followers. They found the trail of a pack of wolves mingled with that of a man. When that had happened before, the trail of the man ended, but here they found the trails mingled day after day. So they told tales of the wolf man, which grew with the telling and made the children afraid to go far from the village. One hunter went so far as to say that he had seen the wolf man hunting with the pack and that he

went on all fours and had hair all over him like a wolf.

One day, as Jut was hunting nearer the village than usual, the pack treed something. As he approached the tree which they surrounded, he noticed that their cry had a curious note of uncertainty such as he had never heard except when they had happened to meet with some of their own wild cousins. But a wolf could not climb a tree. What could it be? When he was near enough, he saw Lup standing at the trunk, looking up into the branches and barking sharply, but wagging his tail at the same time and looking back over his shoulder now and then, as if to assure the pack that this was something different from ordinary game.

When Jut reached him, the big wolf dog stopped barking and looked up at his master inquiringly. And this was what Jut saw. Crouching among the branches and looking down on him with frightened eyes, was a young woman. For a moment he stared at her with open eyes and open-mouthed astonishment. Then he knew who she was. This was Senna, a granddaughter of Suta. He remembered how kind she had been to him as a boy, but he had not expected that she would be so beautiful, and he had almost forgotten how to talk to his own kind, so he simply stared and stared.

But Senna's face changed its expression very rapidly from fright and wonder to friendly self-possession, and she was the first to speak. "Why, you are Jut! Why does n't the big wolf bite you?

Where have you been? How big you have grown! I should not have known you if it had not been for your lame leg — and your eyes!" Jut answered never a word, only stared and stared, but Senna did not seem to be at all offended and talked on. "Oh, I know, you are the wolf man: tell me, did the Great One teach you how to make the wolf hunt for you and obey you?" Still not speaking, Jut whistled for Lup, who came up to him and wagged his tail, while his master stroked his head. A new light came into the girl's face as she looked at the two: "Oh, it must be wonderful to have the Great One tell you a secret. He has spoken to no one of our tribe for a long time, and my grandmother Suta said that it might be because the villagers had not been kind to you when you were a boy."

At last Jut broke his long silence, and what he said might have seemed to an outsider not quite to the point, though Senna did not seem to notice it. "I have the little clay dish you made me and drink out of it every day." And Senna did not seem to be displeased, for she said, "If your big gray wolves will not eat me, I will come down so that we can talk better." From which it will be seen that Senna had the kind heart of her grandmother Suta and the busy tongue of her grandfather Wang. And Jut, the silent, thought the music of the girl's voice sweeter than that of the woodland songsters. All he asked was a long, long time to listen. And Senna seemed to be de-

lighted to have so appreciative an audience, for, if the truth must be told, even her grandmother sometimes tired of her chatter, and Wang found that she interfered with his own extended monologues.

So Senna slipped down the tree, and the great dogs sniffed at her curiously but with approval and lay down about the two in a circle, as if to assure them that all was well. And Senna sat on a moss cushion with Jut at her feet and talked and talked to her heart's content, while Jut listened with a growing light in his eyes and a glow at his heart. The girl told him all the news of the village and drew from him his own story bit by bit.

Jut was lame, but to Senna he was the most wonderful man she had ever seen. There was no young man in the village who had a face like Jut's. It had the look of one who has heard the voice of the Revealer and could never be like other men's. And there was no man in the village with a body so powerful and symmetrical as his. What mattered a lame leg? It simply made him different. And to Jut the girl seemed to give tangible shape to all the vague beauty of the world which he had only dimly sensed before. He looked up into the blue sky with its glory of sun-kissed clouds and out upon the shimmering waters of the river and on to the blue hills beyond. How beautiful they were! Senna was more beautiful than any or all. But Jut could not say these things with his tongue. Fortunately for him, his face was eloquent, and Senna, looking into it, could read his thoughts.

As the evening shadow began to fall, the girl leaped to her feet. "Now I must go to the village and you must come with me." As Jut hesitated, she said, "Don't you know that one to whom the Great One has spoken is afraid of no one?" "But I am afraid of you," answered Jut. "Oh, that is different. Come with me." So Jut followed her, and her words put a new spirit in him, and as they entered the village he bore himself like a chief, and Senna looked at him with eyes shining with pride.

As they entered Angwang, the villagers were too astonished to speak. Senna walked proudly by the side of a strange chief, though he seemed of their own race. He was lame, but his weapons and every line of his powerful body showed him to be a mighty hunter. But at the sight of the great gray wolves trotting quietly behind him and obeying not merely his voice but the wave of his hand, awe and fear were added to their wonder. As Jut looked about him, he recognized some of his boyhood tormentors. He raised his head more proudly. Lame though he was, there was not one who would dare withstand him. And Senna led him to the home of Om, the chief.

"This," said she, "is Jut, to whom the Revealer has shown the heart of the wolf. See, they obey him as the tribesmen obey their chief."

At a sign from Jut the wolf dogs crouched at his feet, waiting his commands with blinking eyes and wagging tails. Om looked at him in silent amazement for a moment and then led him into the

hut to the side of Oma, the aged wise-woman. She was blind, but could still hear. "Mother, the Keeper of Secrets has spoken again. He has spoken to Jut, the boy whom no one cared for and who fled the village. Behind him come six wolves who do his bidding as I have done yours. He has taken the wolf heart out of them and put in its place the heart of a man."

With the help of Om, Oma rose to her feet and stretched out her hand toward the young man. When he came within her reach, she placed her hand on his head and then, with the seeing touch of the blind, moved her hand over his face and over his great muscles. Then she spoke:

"My heart has been heavy within me because the Great One was so long silent. I said in my heart, 'He is angry with the men of Angwang and has gone to the country beyond the sunsetting.' But now I know that when men listen he speaks. Let Jut be second only to Om, for now the Revealer has come back to Angwang."

That night Om brought Jut to the council fire, and he sat among the great ones, while Om told his story. And if there had been any ready to doubt it, there were the great dogs by the fire ready to prove it.

And Jut took Senna to his own cave, and she never lacked a willing listener. For when Jut was away, the old gray wolf who stayed to guard her would listen with comprehending eye. And what more does any eager talker want?

HUN, HUNTER OF WHITE MEN

TRICHON

XVI. HUN, HUNTER OF WHITE MEN

AND Senna, wife of Jut, tamer of the wolf, bore many sons and daughters. The first-born was named Senn, and he had many strange adventures, for he was one of those not content to do as the fathers had done. Even as a boy he loved to wander farther than the other boys dared to go. His mother was very anxious about him, and well she might be, for the woods were not a very safe playground. But his father said: "He has the eye of the seeker for new things. The Revealer will watch over him." So Senn roamed farther and farther, and wherever he went he was followed by a big wolf dog, Can, grandson of Lup, and the boy with the passion for wandering was saved, even more than he knew, by the quick ear, keen scent, and courage of his dog friend.

Senn sometimes took other boys with him, but more often he went alone, because they were afraid to go where he wanted to go. And there seemed to be no end to his hunger to explore the unknown. Just as Ulu and Ul had always heard the call of the sea and the West, he heard the call of the woods and the East. He never was so happy as

when pushing his way through trackless forests or following trails made by wild beasts. When he was in the village, he was always restless, and his eyes seemed to look for something he could not find.

Now in the village of Angwang there was an old man who was honored by all, but especially beloved by the children. His name was Sagg, and he was a cripple, so that he could not hunt with the men of the tribe, but he had a wonderful memory and a cunning tongue. He had stored up in his mind the stories of the adventures of Ang and Sut and the other great men of the tribe. He had listened to the tales which Ulma had told of the land to the east and south from which she had been stolen by the red men, a land where men built huts on the waters of lakes, like beavers, and lived in constant fear of the red men.

In the long winter evenings, when the Angwangs hugged the fire, Sagg told the stories over and over again, but no one tired of them. Sometimes he would sing them in a monotonous chant, with a chorus in which they all joined. On feast days some of the young men would act the adventures which he described. No one listened like Senn, and Sagg, who, like Senna, loved a good listener, told him more stories and stirred his imagination and love of wandering.

To the surprise of all the wise ones of the village Senn grew to man's size and strength. He had had many hair-breadth escapes and had many scars

to remind him of them, but he was sound and fit for anything, which was fortunate, as we shall see.

Finally he tired of trips which always ended in a return to the village, and he decided to take his two wolf dogs, sons of Can, and his finest weapons, and visit the people of Ulma, the Lake Dwellers. All that Ulma had known or that Sagg could tell him was that they lived far to the south and east, on lakes which had great mountains about them, mountains whose tops were lost in the clouds. That they lived in constant dread of the red men and savage beasts he also knew, but cared not, for Senn was one of those whom danger draws, as food the hungry man.

When he left the village, equipped for his long and perilous journey with his two great dogs behind him, it was so early that no one was stirring but the old story-teller, Sagg. Though he had fanned the boy's smoldering ambition to flame, he now dreaded to have him go and tried to persuade him to stay, reminding him of all the dangers which he knew and inventing more for the occasion, but all to no purpose.

For five days Senn journeyed over ground which he had been over before. It was wild and dangerous enough, but more or less familiar. On the sixth day he came to a river broader than any he had ever seen before. On the southern horizon he saw for the first time the outline of the great mountains whose tops were lost in the clouds.

Under them must be the dwellings of the people of Ulma.

Though the river was broad and deep, Senn did not hesitate. He found a dry log on the shore and lashed his weapons to it, and then pushed it out into the stream, swimming behind it. For a moment the dogs, Chen and Chut, whined and shivered on the bank, but, seeing their master pushing steadily out into the stream, they leaped in and followed him.

Though man and dogs were powerful swimmers, the strong current swept them more rapidly down the stream than they were able to swim across it. Before they had much more than reached midstream they had been carried around a bend in the river. Here the river suddenly narrowed between high and rugged banks and became a roaring, foaming rapid. Senn felt the pull of the rushing water almost as soon as he saw its white foam. For a few moments he tried to struggle against it, but soon saw that it was useless. The only thing for him to do was to drift through the rapids in the wake of the log on which his weapons were lashed, hoping that it would protect him from the rocks.

Just as he was entering the rapids he turned to call his dogs, and saw just behind him another swimmer with such a look of terror on his face as he had never seen before, and it needed but a glance to see why. Just behind him the two great wolf dogs were converging on him and in a few strokes would be on top of him. Before him were

the rapids. In the man's mouth was a long knife. With that wonderful power of noting details so often possessed by those in great peril, he saw that the man's mouth was cut from gripping the knife too tightly in his fright. Evidently the man had followed him, not noticing the dogs, expecting to take him by surprise.

At that instant the rapids swallowed him up. Mouth and nose and eyes were filled with water and flying spume. He was enveloped in noises more thunderous than a hundred storms. He was tossed about like a dry twig, out of the water, beneath it, gasping, struggling, but holding to his log with the blind instinct of self-preservation. Soon he lost all consciousness of where he was and what was happening to him, but his mind rushed back over the details of his past life, finding no detail too small. Then came blackness, a sense of falling out of the world into space, and then a blessed stillness, like the sleep of childhood.

When he slowly came back to consciousness, he was not sure but that he had passed to the spirit world, all was so still. Slowly and painfully he opened his eyes. There was the blue sky above him with its flocks of white-winged clouds. Perhaps — But he was too tired to look and see. Then the sound of a low whine penetrated his ear, and he dimly felt the scraping of a hot tongue on his face. With great effort he opened his hand and closed it on wet sand. Little by little he came back to his world and himself. He turned over and propped

his head on his arm and looked about him. He lay on a sand beach, with his feet in the water. On either side of him crouched Chen and Chut, battered and bleeding, but very much alive and anxiously licking his face and hands.

With the unsteadiness of a drunken man rousing from a stupor he sat up and looked about him. Though all was quiet near him, he could still hear the roar of the rapids in the distance. Then he remembered. He had come through the mad water alive. Odin must love him, for he had saved him from the cruel spirits of the river. And the other man? At the thought he staggered to his feet. A little below him he saw the log which had been his lifeboat slowly drifting by the shore. Painfully he crawled after it, and when he reached it, found to his delight that his weapons were still lashed to it. Their possession seemed to make him a man again instead of a snail. The blood began to flow and warmed his chilled body. Courage came back to him and with it a consuming hunger. Higher up on the bank some wild berries attracted him, and he climbed up and ate greedily, growing hungrier with every mouthful.

As he was trying in vain to satisfy his hunger, his attention was drawn to a small island of rocks some twenty feet from the shore and lying partly in the water and partly on a shelving rock — what was it — a log or a man? He rubbed his eyes and looked more carefully. It was the body of a man, probably the man who had followed him into the

rapids. He must be dead; let him lie until the vultures or fishes picked his bones. But if he should come back to life as he had done? Was it safe to have such an enemy following him?

Taking his bronze axe, he went down to the shore and waded out to the rocks. The body lay with the head just raised above the level of the water. The face was like bronze in color, the hair straight and black, and the mouth was bloody. Yes, it was the man who had planned to stab him in the back as he swam. He must be dead, but he would take no chances. As he raised his axe to strike, something seemed to hold his hand. To kill a man in fair fight was one thing. If Odin had spared his life, why should Senn take it?

At that moment the man groaned and opened his eyes. Something in their look or it may be something in his own heart changed Senn's purpose. Wondering why he did it, he drew the battered and half-drowned man out on the rocks. He was bleeding to death from a terrible wound in the leg, and Senn stopped the flow of blood by binding tightly about it a strip of hide. After a while the man revived and looked with wonder and fear at the man who bent over him. Then, seeing what had been done for him, the fear gave way to a larger wonder. That the man whom he had tried to kill should be tending him and saving his life seemed at first too strange to be believed, but as Senn continued to bind up his wounds, there could be no mistake, and a new look came into his eyes — a look like that

which the great dogs gave their master when he caressed them, a look strangely out of place on his rugged face. Seeing it, Senn knew that he had made a friend out of a murderous enemy.

When Senn had finished dressing the red man's wounds, his own empty stomach began to cry for food. The problem was, what to do with the one who plainly could not do for himself. He must get him to the shore and then hunt for food. With great difficulty Senn dragged the man, who was very large, into the water, and half carried, half towed him to the shore. Finding a sheltered place, he made him as comfortable as possible under the circumstances, took up his weapons, and called the dogs.

Just as he was going, the man beckoned to him and asked for a knife, by easily understood signs. For a moment Senn hesitated. Why give a knife to a man who had attempted his life, and yet he knew what it meant to be left alone in the woods of that age without a weapon for defence. So he gave it to him. The man seized it with a look of gratitude which was like the breaking of sunlight through a black cloud, and Senn was glad that he had not hesitated to give it. When he came to reason about it later, he knew that his instinct was right. If the red man was to be with him even for a short time, he must be a friend, not an enemy, and if a friend he must be armed, so that he could play a man's part.

Senn himself was faint from hunger, and Chen and Chut were wasp-stomached. The woods were

full of small game, which he could have shot if his bow string had been dry. He might starve before he could catch anything in traps. His only hope was to find a deer runway, and spear one as his dogs drove it past. He had not gone very far before he found a path leading down to the river bank showing the fresh tracks of deer and other animals. Taking his place in a thicket hard by the path and so located that his scent would not be carried to any animals that came that way, he signaled to the dogs to beat up the game, beginning with the river.

It was not long before he heard the cry of the dogs and then a chorus of squealing and grunting which came nearer every moment. He did not need to be told that it was a herd of wild hogs. For a moment he hesitated. The wild boar was one of the most dangerous and most dreaded animals of the wild. Hunters rarely ventured to attack them alone, and even when they hunted them in groups, with every possible advantage on their side, some unlucky hunter was very likely to pay the death penalty. But hunger made Senn desperate, and he held his ground.

In a moment the herd was on him. The first one to come abreast of his ambush was a young sow, and he thrust his javelin into its side with all his might. Then he dashed away, hoping to avoid the rush of those which followed, but he was not quick enough. A savage old tusker caught sight of him and charged with incredible speed and fury. The

dogs were at some distance and had troubles of their own, so his only hope was to reach the river and dash in, as the boar has an unaccountable aversion to water.

He tore through the brush at top speed, but the boar gained on him at every leap. Still he would have reached the water safely if he had not tripped on a vine just at the river bank. As he fell, the boar rushed over him and he felt his hot breath as he passed. With a squeal of fury the boar wheeled to rip up his fallen enemy with his tusks, which were as long and sharp as knives. Senn had no hope, but tried to roll to one side. He was so near the edge of the bank that he slid over and fell several feet, the boar falling almost on top of him. For a moment he was stunned by the fall. When he came to himself, the boar lay beside him in his death agony, the blood spouting from a great gash just over his heart. The red man knelt beside him with the dripping knife in his hand and with a look of savage satisfaction on his face. He had paid his debt to the white man.

When Senn looked about him, he saw that they had fallen almost on top of the red man's resting place. With the instinct of his people, he saw something more in it than chance, and lifting his face to the sky, he said: "O Great One, Thou hast twice held the hand of the spinner who would have cut the thread of my life. If it is that I may do some great thing, show it to me!"

And the red man, seeing that he prayed, bowed

his head also, and said something in a language which Senn could not understand. Then they lit a fire, Senn gathering dry moss and sticks and the red men in lighting it, rubbed two willow sticks in a way that Senn had never seen before. The men and dogs feasted. They ate as if they never expected to be able to eat again.

That night they lay in a sheltered place under the bank, watched over by the two dogs. It did not take long to recover from his wounds and exhaustion in the days when man was young, and Senn woke to find himself nearly as strong as ever. But it would be a few days before the red man could walk far. As Senn pondered what he should do, the red man, who seemed to read his thoughts, made eager signs to him. He pointed to his leg, and then held up two fingers to the sun and made the sign of walking. In two days he could go on. Then he pointed to the dogs and to himself, then he took Senn's hand and laid it first on his bowed head and then on his heart. He would follow Senn like the dogs and be as obedient and faithful. Though Senn had something of the instinctive aversion of his race to the red man, he still wanted a companion in his venture. Then he remembered the story of Rang. Perhaps this man was like Rang. He would make him a blood brother, according to the custom of his people.

So Senn took a small flint knife from his belt and scraped the flesh of his arm till it bled a little. Then he took the arm of the red man and did the

same. Next he mingled the blood of the red man with his own in the palm of his left hand. "Now," said he, raising his right hand to the sky, "we are brothers. One blood, one life. Let Odin bear witness."

Though the red man did not understand the words, he did understand the meaning of the blood rite and raised his right hand to the sky in assent. Then he pointed to himself and said, "Hun," and Senn knew that it was the name of his new brother.

THE LAKE DWELLERS

XVII. THE LAKE DWELLERS

AFTER two days Hun was well enough to take the trail again, and Senn tried to tell him by signs what it was he sought. He took him to the river's edge and made a rough hut on sticks driven in the shallow water; then he pointed questioningly to the south and east. For some time Hun studied it without looking at Senn, who wondered whether he understood, but finally he turned and nodded his head in assent; then he made Senn understand by signs that he had seen the lake dwellings and that he could lead him to them. It was not till later that Senn knew that Hun had understood him from the first and why he had hesitated to make it known.

On the morning of the third day they started southward, Hun taking the lead. They went by ways so different from those which Senn would have chosen that he sometimes hesitated to follow, but when Hun pointed to the scar of brotherhood on his arm he felt ashamed of his suspicions.

On the evening of the eighth day they drew near the great mountains, and Senn was filled with awe. Their snow-capped peaks reached up into the clouds. This must be the home of Odin and his wild hunts-

men. A distant roar told of a thunder-storm in the mountains. Thor must be there with his terrible hammer. He felt a new sense of fear. Perhaps it was not best for men to come too near to the hunting grounds of the Great Ones. As he looked at Hun, he saw that he too seemed afraid, but it evidently was not of the powers of the mountains. He seemed to fear some hidden enemy at every bend of the trail, which, as Senn noticed for the first time, had been made with human feet.

After they had reached the top of a hill, which they had climbed with more than usual caution, they looked down upon a valley in whose center was the most beautiful lake Senn had ever seen, while to the south the giant mountains towered heavenward. The mountains were still gilded and silvered by the light of the setting sun, but the shadows had already fallen on the valley. In the dim light it was yet possible to see the outline of a village perched on piles at the western end of the lake.

But Senn soon noticed that Hun was not looking at the village — he was evidently quite familiar with it — but was looking intently up the valley toward the east. At last he found what he sought, and, laying hold of Senn's arm, pointed to an open meadow across which shadowy figures were moving. Senn remembered the story of Rang and the Red Men and knew that they must be men on horseback, and many of them.

After Senn had watched them for some moments in wonder, Hun began to talk excitedly in his own

tongue, a thing which he had not done before, gesticulating as he spoke. He pointed to the horsemen and then to himself. Then he imitated the motions of a man on horseback, and Senn knew that these must be Hun's people. When Hun pointed to the lake village and then went through the motions of stabbing and slashing with his knife, he understood the situation as well as if Hun's language had been his. Hun's people were about to make a raid on the village on the lake. Unless the villagers were warned in time, the old story of plunder and murder would be repeated, and the red men would carry off many maidens as Ulma had been carried away in the days of Rang.

These villagers, thought Senn, are the people of Ulma and so my people. I have been sent by the All Seer to warn them, but what of Hun? Would he stand with him or his own people? By signs he questioned Hun. He was going to the village. Would Hun go with him or to his tribe? But Hun had evidently made his decision before. He pointed to the scar of blood brotherhood on his arm and of the scarcely healed wound on his leg, and without a word started down the hill-side toward the village.

It was nearly dark by this time, and as Senn stumbled along, he realized that he never could have found his way to the village alone in the dark. After what seemed hours of aimless wandering in trackless woods, they came out upon the shore of the lake near the village. Clearly the lake dwellers

had no suspicion of danger. All was quiet. They had not even taken the precaution to pull in the draw which connected a slender bridge with the land. A solitary watchman dozed over the railing. Evidently he considered his duty a mere matter of form.

Senn hesitated for a moment how to make his presence and friendly intention known; then he turned to Hun for a suggestion as he had got in the habit of doing, but the red man had gone without a sound, leaving him alone. Cautiously approaching the bridge, he whistled softly and then louder, but the sentinel still dozed. Some one had heard, however, for he heard footsteps on the bridge. Soon there appeared from the shadows the figure of a girl, who came rapidly on, paying no attention to the sleeping watchman. Evidently she thought the whistle a signal from some one she knew. When she came to the draw and saw no one, she hesitated, and Senn softly whistled again and slowly approached. When he was near enough so that the girl could see that he was a stranger, she gave a suppressed cry and started to run back, but not before she had seen that Senn had thrown his spear on the ground and was making the sign of peace. Perhaps she noted also that Senn was young and like her own people, though bigger and more powerful.

Having run a few steps with the apparent intention of waking the sentinel, she seemed to think better of it and turned and looked again at Senn, who had come still nearer. She did not seem to

be as much frightened as before, and this time only took a step in retreat before turning again and challenging him with questioning eyes. As for Senn, he forgot for the moment his errand. So Ulma must have looked in the time of his grandfathers, only not so beautiful. Then he remembered, and spoke to her in his own language, using only the shortest words and speaking very slowly. The look of growing terror in her face showed that she knew what danger threatened them.

Beckoning to Senn to follow her, she fled from the bridge, waking the watchman as she passed with two words which sounded to Senn like the name of the red men in his own language, and which startled him into instant action as if he had been struck with a whip. As Senn followed the girl, he heard the creaking of the slender draw as it was being hastily pulled in, and the whining of Chen and Chut, who had been left behind. More than once he nearly fell in his attempt to keep up with the young girl in her rapid retreat. After several turns she brought him to the entrance of the largest hut in the village, and, giving a shrill call, pulled him through a door so low and narrow that the young giant had great difficulty in crowding in.

If he had had time to think, he would have hesitated to call on a strange chief in such unceremonious manner, for in those days the man who came suddenly was counted an enemy, but the girl gave him no time, and she had the way of one who has always been obeyed. After his eyes had become

wonted to the dim light of the interior, which was furnished by a single flickering torch, he saw an old man seated on a rush mat. His legs were crumpled under him and evidently useless, and his back terribly hunched, so that it seemed almost as if the man had been crushed into the position he was in by some great weight falling upon him. He was a cripple and such a cripple as rarely survived in the grim conditions of the long ago. But the head was massive and finely formed and the face that of a ruler of men. Here was a man who had ruled by the power of his brain and not by the power of his hand. Though he was a crippled dwarf, Senn did not need to be told that he was a chief and the girl his daughter. He was old and she young. He was a cripple, she splendid in her supple strength, but there were the same lines of strength in the faces of both.

Hurriedly the girl told her story, the old chief looking first at her and then at the young man behind her. Senn noted that his face, notwithstanding his surprise and the terrible tidings which his daughter was bringing him, never lost its composure. When the girl had finished, he gave her a few hurried commands and sent her out to arouse the village, and then he turned to Senn and looked at him with eyes that took note of everything from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet and seemed to read his most hidden thoughts. Then he spoke in words which Senn did not understand, but which had a familiar sound, and which, with

the gestures accompanying them, conveyed some definite ideas. Senn knew that he was asked to reassert, on his honor as a man and with the fear of the gods upon him, that his tidings were true; he knew that the old chief wanted to know if he would fight with them when the red men came. So Senn put his left hand over his heart and raised his right to the heavens and called Odin to bear witness that he spoke the truth and that he would fight for the villagers as if they were his own people. Even before the chief ceased speaking to Senn, the village about them began to hum like a hive of angry bees. Seta was the voice of the girl's father, and all obeyed her as if she had been their queen. When Senn joined her at the direction of the chief, she was giving orders to put the village in readiness for a siege. Following the motion of her hand, Senn joined a group of men who were to tear down the bridge that connected the village with the shore. He had never obeyed a woman's direction before, at least since he was a child, but every one obeyed her as if nothing else were possible.

At first the villagers looked at Senn with some suspicion, but when they saw that his great strength enabled him to do the work of two men and that he did not spare himself, they accepted him as one of themselves, and Seta, as she went to and fro, carrying the commands of her father, watched the labors of the young man with growing approval.

The men worked with feverish haste, and before the first gray of morning the preparations for an

attack or a siege were complete. The bridge had been destroyed, barricades of timber had been placed on the shore side of the runways connecting the houses, and the walls and roofs of the huts, which were covered with rushes, had been soaked with water, so that they could not be set on fire by burning arrows.

All through the night there had been no sign of the enemy and the villagers grew tired and suspicious. Who was this stranger? Who knew that he was not making sport of them? Senn was conscious of many dark and angry looks, and he began to wonder what his own fortune would be if the red men did not come. Perhaps they were not planning to attack the village at all. Then Seta would think him a liar, and that troubled him more than the angry looks of the men.

Some of the workers had slipped away to their huts when the cry of a wolf, taken up at once by his mate, broke the stillness of the shore. Senn knew at once that it was the cry of Chen and Chut whom he had left behind him on the shore. He knew also what the cry meant. It was not the hunting cry, but the cry of challenge and warning. The red men were coming. He turned to find Seta by his side, looking at him with anxious questioning. He pointed to the shore, and they listened. The baying of the wolf dogs ceased for a moment, and they could hear plainly the muffled footsteps of many men and horses. Then shadowy figures crept out of the woods and made their way to where

the bridge had been. There they stopped, in evident perplexity and surprise. No bridge was there, and the fierce barking of the dogs disturbed them. They hesitated for a few moments and then went back into the woods as quietly as they had come.

But the villagers knew their old enemies too well to fancy that this was the end of it. There was no more sleep that night, and the morning found every one alert. Just at daybreak a band of horsemen filed out of the woods and lined up on the shore. There were several hundreds of them, and a more savage-looking group of men could not be imagined. At a signal from their chief they charged up and down the shore in front of the village, waving their spears in the air and yelling like demons. Sometimes the more daring ones would swim their horses to within bow-shot of the village. It needed no imagination to picture what would have happened if the Huns had found the bridge in place, the draw down, and the watchman asleep. Even now terror was plainly to be seen, not merely in the faces of the women and children, but also of the men as well. It was true that they did not need to fear starvation, for a net let down from a trap door in the middle of their huts would be filled with fish. The thatch of their huts was soaked so that they could not be set on fire, but one never could tell what the savage Huns would do.

At last the mad warriors tired of their cruel game, and a messenger swam his horse out to within speaking distance of the village. At a sign from

Seta four men brought the chief from his hut to where he could hear what the messenger had to say. And this was the message of the red men: "For longer than the oldest can remember the lake dwellers have paid tribute to the red men, for the fish eaters cannot stand against the eaters of meat, but you have forgotten the ancient custom. We find your village closed against us. But do not think that you can escape us by tearing down your bridge. Give us the ancient tribute, or we will destroy your village, kill every man of you, and take your women with us." All this was said, not in words, but in signs which no one could mistake.

At once a group of men gathered about the old chief, and Senn could tell by their eager gestures that some of them were for yielding to the demands of the red men, but he shook his head and pointed to Seta with a look that could not be misunderstood. She was to be part of the tribute. A sudden frenzy seized Senn. Had these men no more courage than the fish which they ate? He leaped up in a fury of surprise and disgust. Some of the women had already begun to pile up on the runways their choicest belongings to bribe the red men. Senn dashed in among them, sweeping their proposed tribute aside with his feet and, waving his great axe above his head, gave the war-cry of his tribe. Instantly the tide of feeling turned. The timid were shamed and the courageous heartened. The face of the old chief shone with a new hope. "The young man will do what I would do if it were not for

this broken body. See, he has the strength of Thor, and his axe is like the hammer of the thunderer." And Seta saw all that Senn did, and he seemed to her as wonderful as the god himself, but she was glad that he was not a god, for then — But there was no time for thinking. The red men, seeing their messenger scorned, were swimming their horses toward the village. The women and children hid in the huts, and the men crouched behind the logs on the runways.

At the command of Sed, the old chief, they did not shoot their arrows till the swimmers were well within reach; then they poured a deadly fire on them. The bow strings of many of the Huns were wet, and they could not shoot to advantage from the backs of swimming horses, so they were soon compelled to retreat to the shore, leaving some of their number to feed the fishes. The villagers were wild with delight, thinking that they had stood off the red men and that they would not dare attack again, but Senn had been with Hun long enough to know that the red men were not to be stopped as easily as this. He showed Sed that the men on the shore were not getting ready to retreat but to make a new attack. A fire had swept over the lake shore some time before and there were many dry logs in the woods. Some men were dragging them to the shore with astonishing rapidity, while others constructed rude rafts with a shelter of logs in front. This time the forces were to be more evenly matched.

Before noon some twenty large rafts had been constructed. This time the villagers must stand off an attack from boats manned by twice as many men as there were in the village. The besiegers formed a half-circle with their rafts and slowly closed in on their enemy. The villagers shot their arrows as before, but few reached their mark, and the rafts came steadily on. Soon the red men were almost under the scaffolding which connected the huts. Here the villagers had the advantage for a moment, for they could shoot down on the besiegers, but in doing so they had to expose themselves. Then the terrible cries of the wounded and dying mingled with the war-cries of both red men and white. Senn fought with the courage of his race, but Sed noted with approval that he did not fight blindly.

With a terrible sweep of his bronze axe, Senn had just cleared the railing of an unprotected runway of red men, who were clambering over, when a shrill call reached his ear above the din of battle. It was a cry like that of a great fishhawk to his mate as he is about to plunge after his victim. It was the call of Hun and it came from high up on the bank. He looked up, and there stood Hun on a projecting rock, pointing excitedly to something behind Senn. Senn turned instantly, but none too soon. The chief of the red men with a few of his most daring followers had paddled their raft behind the village, and while the villagers were warding off the attack in front, had made a safe landing and were dashing

down a narrow runway to attack them in the rear.

A moment more, and the story of Senn would have ended here, but the warning call of Hun had given him a chance. With a great cry Senn hurled himself at the new enemy, and Seta gave the alarm. Fortunately the runway was narrow and only the leader could reach him. For a moment the two men hailed blows on each other with fury enough to have killed a dozen men, but the red man was no match for the young giant in an axe duel, and a blow like that of Thor himself swept him from the narrow bridge into the water. The man behind him made a few half-hearted strokes and followed his leader. The other men turned and fled, swimming for their lives, but to no purpose as they were easy marks for the village bowmen.

The death of the leader of the red men and the failure of the attack in the rear turned the tide of battle, and the besiegers tried to get away from the hornet's nest as best they might. They tried to paddle their clumsy rafts to the shore, keeping the log bulwarks between them and the villagers' deadly fire. But it was not easily done. A strong wind had sprung up, blowing off shore, and many of the rafts were blown back into the range of the arrows, notwithstanding the frantic efforts of the paddlers. Those that reached the shore mounted their horses and fled as if they did not mean to stop before reaching the sun-rising. And they had need to hurry, for the villagers, intoxicated with

their success, manned their boats and pursued the stragglers to the shore, while Senn and some of the young men followed the trail of retreat into the woods.

They found there a number of horses whose riders had not come back, and they led them in triumph to the shore and tied them where all could see. As they stood there, Chen and Chut came rushing up to their master with loud barks of welcome. For a moment all was confusion. Some of the horses bolted, and the men plunged into the water and started to swim for the village. But when they saw that the great wolves did not tear Senn, but groveled at his feet, they were astonished beyond measure. Perhaps this was one of the huntsmen of Odin whom he had sent to be their deliverer. Then they bowed themselves before him as if he were a god, and though he shook his head, there were many who believed that Odin had sent him to save the village from the red men.

The story of the slaughter of the red men must have been told far and wide in the east country, for as long as Senn lived, and he lived to be a very old man, no red man ever dared to ask tribute of the lake dwellers.

And Senn stayed with the lake dwellers for many days and was taught many wonderful things. He learned how to make bone needles, how to make a hut and thatch it so that the rain would not beat in. He learned how to make hooks and nets and to catch the most luscious fish. By and by he grew

tired of fish and longed for the old home. So he took Seta, daughter of Sed, and brought her to the village of Angwang, and they made a hut of tree trunks driven in the ground, with a thatched roof. And Hun, who could not go back to his own people, came and lived in the village, and, like Rang, taught the children of the village and especially those of Senn and Seta all the wisdom of the red men, so that the Angwangs knew more than any other tribe, and they grew rich and numerous and became a great people.

HOW MEN FOUND THE GREAT SPIRIT

XVIII. HOW MEN FOUND THE GREAT SPIRIT

IN the olden time when woods covered all the earth except the deserts and the river bottoms, and men lived on the fruits and berries they found and the wild animals which they could shoot or snare, when they dressed in skins and lived in caves, there was little time for thought. But as men grew stronger and more cunning and learned how to live together, they had more time to think and more mind to think with.

Men had learned many things. They had learned that cold weather followed hot, and spring, winter; and that the sun got up in the morning and went to bed at night. They saw that the great water was kindly when the sun shone, but when the sun hid its face and the wind blew upon it, it grew black and angry and upset their canoes. They had found that knocking flints together or rubbing dry sticks would light the dry moss, and that the flames which would bring back summer in the midst of winter and day in the midst of night were hungry and must be fed, and when they escaped devoured the woods and only the water could stop them.

These and many other things men learned, but no

one knew why it all was or how it came to be. Men began to *wonder,* and that was the beginning of the path which led to the Great Spirit.

In the ages when men began to wonder there was born a boy whose name was Wo.[1] As he lay in his mother's arms, she loved him and wondered, "His body is of my body, but whence comes the life — the spirit which is like mine and yet not like it?" And his father, seeing the wonder in the mother's eyes, said, "Whence came he?" And there was no one to answer, and so they called him Wo to remind them that they knew not whence he came.

As Wo grew up, he was stronger and swifter of foot than any of his tribe. He became a mighty hunter. He knew the ways of all the wild things and could read the signs of the seasons. As he grew older, they made him a chief and listened while he spoke at the council board, but Wo was not satisfied. His name was a question, and questioning filled his mind.

Whence did he come? Whither was he going? Why did the sun rise and set? Why did life burst into leaf and flower with the coming of the spring? Why did the child become a man and the man grow old and die?

The mystery grew upon him as he pondered. In the morning he stood on a mountain top and stretching out his hands cried, "Whence?"; at night he cried to the moon, "Whither?" He listened to the

[1] Wo meant, in the language of the time, "whence."

soughing of the wind in the trees and to the song of the brook and tried to learn their language. He peered eagerly into the eyes of little children and tried to read the mystery of life. He listened at the still lips of the dead, waiting for them to tell him whither they had gone. He went about among his fellows silent and absorbed, always looking for the unseen and listening for the unspoken. He sat so long silent at the council board that the elders questioned him. To their questioning he replied like one awakening from a dream:

"Our fathers since the beginning have trailed the beasts of the wood. There is none so cunning as the fox, but we can trail him to his lair. Though we are weaker than the great bear and buffalo, yet by our wisdom we overcome them. The deer is more swift of foot, but by craft we overtake him. We cannot fly like a bird, but we snare the winged one with a hair. We have made ourselves many cunning inventions by which the beasts, the trees, the wind, the water and the fire become our servants.

"Then we speak great swelling words: How great and wise we are! There is none like us in the air, in the wood, or in the water! But the words are false. Our pride is like that of a partridge drumming on his log in the wood before the fox leaps upon him. Our sight is like that of the mole burrowing under the ground. Our wisdom is like a drop of dew upon the grass. Our ignorance is like the great water which no eye can measure.

"Our life is like a bird coming out of the dark,

fluttering for a heart-beat in the hut and then going forth into the dark again. No one can tell us whence it comes or whither it goes. I have asked the wise men, and they cannot answer; I have listened to the voice of the trees and wind and water, but I do not know their tongue; I have questioned the sun and the moon and the stars, but they are silent.

"But to-day, in the silence before the darkness gives place to light, I seemed to hear a still small voice within my breast, saying to me, 'Wo, the questioner, rise up like the stag from his lair; away, alone, to the mountain of the sun. There thou shalt find that which thou seekest.'

"I go, but if I fall by the trail another will take it up. If I find the answer, I will return."

Waiting for none, Wo left the council of his tribe and went his way toward the mountain of the sun. For six days he made his way through the trackless woods, guided by the sun by day and the stars by night. On the seventh he came to the great mountain — the mountain of the sun, on whose top, according to the tradition of his tribe, the sun rested each night. All day long he climbed, saying to himself, "I will sleep to-night in the hut of the sun, and he will tell me whence I come and whither I go."

But as he climbed, the sun seemed to climb higher and higher. As he neared the top, a cold cloud settled like a night bird on the mountain. Chilled and faint with hunger and fatigue, Wo

struggled on. Just at sunset he reached the top of the mountain, but it was not the mountain of the sun, for many days' journey to the west the sun was sinking in the Great Water.

A bitter cry broke from Wo's parched lips. His long trail was useless. There was no answer to his questions. The sun journeyed farther and faster than men dreamed, and of wood and waste and water there was no end. Overcome with misery and weakness, he fell upon a bed of moss with his back toward the sunset and the unknown.

And Wo slept, although it was unlike any sleep he had ever known before, and as he slept he dreamed. He was alone upon the mountain waiting for the answer. A cloud covered the mountain, but all was silent. A mighty wind rent the cloud and rushed roaring through the crags, but there was no voice in the wind. Thunder pealed, lightning flashed, but he whom Wo sought was not there.

In the hush that followed the storm, Wo heard a voice low and quiet, but in it all the sounds of earth and sky seemed to mingle — the song of the bird, the whispering of the trees, and the murmuring of the brook:

"Wo, I am He whom thou seekest; I am the Great Spirit; I am the All-Father. Ever since I made man of the dust of the earth and so child of the earth and brother to all living, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, thus making him my son. I have waited for a seeker who should

find me. In the fullness of time thou hast come, Wo, the questioner, to the Answerer.

"Thy body is of the earth and to earth returns; thy spirit is mine; it is given thee for a space to make according to thy will; then it returns to me better or worse for thy making. Thou hast found me because thy heart was pure and thy search for me tireless. Go back to thy tribe and be to them the Voice of the Great Spirit. From henceforth I will speak to thee and to the seekers that come after thee in a thousand voices and appear in a thousand shapes. I will speak in the voices of the wood and streams and of those you love. I will appear to you in the sun by day and in the stars by night. When thy people and mine are in need and wish for the will of the Great Spirit, then shall my spirit brood over thine and the words that thou shalt speak shall be my words."

And Wo awoke, facing the east and the rising sun. His body was warmed by its rays. A great gladness filled his soul. He had sought and found, and prayer came to him like song to the bird:

"O Great Spirit, Father of my spirit, the sun is Thy messenger, but Thou art brighter than the sun. Drive Thou the darkness before me. Be Thou the light of my spirit."

As Wo went down the mountain and took the journey back to the home of his people, his face shone, and the light never seemed to leave it, so that men called him "He of the shining face."

When Wo came back to his tribe, all who saw

his face knew that he had found the answer, and they gathered again about the council fire to hear. As Wo stood up and looked into the eager faces in the circle of the fire, he remembered that the Great Spirit had given him no message and for a moment he was dumb. Then the words of the Great Spirit came to him again: "When thy people and mine shall need to know my will, my spirit shall brood over thine and the words that thou shalt speak shall be my words." Looking into the eager faces full of longing and questioning, his spirit moved within him and he spoke:

"I went, I sought, I found the Great Spirit, who dwells in the earth as your spirits dwell in your bodies. It is from Him the spirit comes. We are His children. He cares for us more than a mother for the child at her breast, or the father for the son that is his pride. His love is like the air we breathe; it is about us; it is within us.

"The sun is the sign of His brightness, the sky of His greatness, and mother-love and father-love and the love of man and woman are the signs of His love. We are but children; we cannot enter into the council of the Great Chief until we have been proved, but this is His will, that we love one another as He loves us; that we bury forever the hatchet of hate; that no man shall take what is not his own and the strong shall help the weak."

The chiefs did not wholly understand the words of Wo, but they took a hatchet and buried it by the fire, saying, "Thus bury we hate between man and

his brother," and they took an acorn and put it in the earth, saying, "Thus plant we the love of the strong for the weak." And it became the custom of the tribe that the great council in the spring should bury an axe and plant an acorn.

Every morning the tribe gathered to greet the rising sun, and with right hands raised and left upon their hearts prayed, "Great Spirit, hear us; guide us to-day; make our wills Thy will, our ways Thy way."

And the tribe grew stronger and greater and wiser than all the other tribes of men.

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